

INDIAN CARPETS
AND
RUGS.

THE JOURNAL OF INDIAN ART
AND
INDUSTRY

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.

Vol. XI.

JANUARY, 1906]

[No. 93.

CONTENTS.

INDIAN CARPETS

AND

RUGS.



GOVERNMENT GENERAL POSTS OFFICE
P.O. BOX 1, BARRACKS - 1.

Illustrated by
Three Page Plates in Colours
and
Sixteen Page Plates in Monochrome.

Published under the patronage of the Government of India.

PHOTOGRAPHED, PRINTED, AND PUBLISHED BY W. GRIGGS, ELM HOUSE, HANOVER STREET, PECKHAM, LONDON.

LONDON AGENT - BERNARD QUARITCH, 15, PICCADILLY, W

Asian Carpet Designs

By W. GRIGGS

(27 years in the service of the Hon. East India Company, and Secretary of State for India).

A Crown (20 by 15 inches) Series of 150 plates, in 6 Parts, each containing 25 plates, superbly printed in colours, and enclosed in a strong ornamental Box Portfolio. Price £18 net.

In this exhaustive work an endeavour has been made to cover the whole known field of early carpet manufacture. The text (by Colonel T. H. Hendley, C.I.E.) is decorated in a style worthy of the charming designs illustrated; each page being surrounded with a beautiful 16th century Persian border in eight colours and gold. His Highness the Maharaja of Jaipur, with his well-known liberality, readily consented to allow his collection of old Persian and other carpets to be photographed specially for this work. From these carpets full-size patterns of the details, in colour of originals, have been prepared by Jaipur artists, also large "keys" showing the planning of the details in forming the schemes of design. In all cases the designs are on a large scale suitable for technical work. The best carpets and rugs now in the Indian and Persian Sections of the Victoria and Albert Museum have been photographed, including the beautiful Ardabil carpet* (see press notice).

* This carpet measures 34 feet by 17 feet 6 inches, and contains about 380 hand-tied knots to the square inch, which gives over 32,500,000 knots to the whole carpet. One-fourth of the carpet has been photographically reduced to half scale of original, and has been printed in the colours of the original to form 10 double plates (30 by 20 inches), and may also be obtained flat for mounting on linen, about 8 feet 6 inches by 4 feet 4½ inches, for Museums, Schools, and other educational or industrial purposes. The price of this part, or separate set of plates 101-125, for framing, is £3 net.

NOTE ON PERSIAN CARPETS. [Daily Telegraph.]

In the Indian section of the South Kensington Museum is now exhibited one of the most splendid examples of the product of the Persian loom that have ever been seen in Europe. This is the famous Ardabil or Ardebyl carpet, so-called from a Persian town in the province of Aderbaïdjan, which from time immemorial has been an emporium of merchandise, en route between Tiflis to Ispahan. Ardabil, which from the salubrity of its climate and the abundance of water which it enjoys has been called "the abode of felicity," is full of mosques and the tombs of exceptionally pious or otherwise renowned Mussalmans, and the famous carpet now on view is said to have been obtained from a mosque at Ardabil. It was not without difficulty that this wonderful piece of weaving was secured for South Kensington. The price demanded for it (£2,500)¹ exceeded that which the authorities of the Museum thought themselves justified to offer; but through the liberality of a number of gentlemen deeply interested in Oriental arts and crafts the sum which the Museum was prepared to give has been supplemented to an adequate amount. The carpet thus obtained for the nation measures 34 feet in length and 17 feet 6 inches in breadth, and an idea of the extreme fineness of its texture may be formed from the fact that it contains about 380 hand-tied knots to the square inch, which gives over 32,500,000 knots to the whole carpet. The main design comprises a large central medallion in pale yellow, surrounded by cartouches of various colours, disposed on a dark blue ground diapered with floral tracery. Each of the corners is filled with a section of a large medallion surrounded by cartouches. The border is composed of long and circular panels alternating with lobed outlines on a brown ground covered with floral embellishments, while at the summit of the carpet is a panel bearing a devout inscription tending to the inference that the carpet was originally used as a veil or curtain for a porch, and that it was the work of the slave "of the Holy Place, Maksoud, of Kashan, in the year of Hegira 946," corresponding with our A.D. 1540. Now, Kashan, on the high road between Teheran and Ispahan, was founded by Zobeide, the favourite wife of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid. It has been destroyed once or twice by earthquakes, but is at present a flourishing town adorned by a palace for the Shah, many large and beautiful mosques, and a number of caravanserais and public baths. At Kashan numerous manufactories of carpets, shawls, brocades, and silk fabrics are still carried on; but in 1540, when Maksoud, the slave of "the Holy Place," executed this marvellous work, admirable alike for its fineness of texture, its beauty of colour and symmetry of design, Kashan, with the rest of Persia, was under the sway of the Sophi dynasty, and the town is alleged to have contained no fewer than a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants.

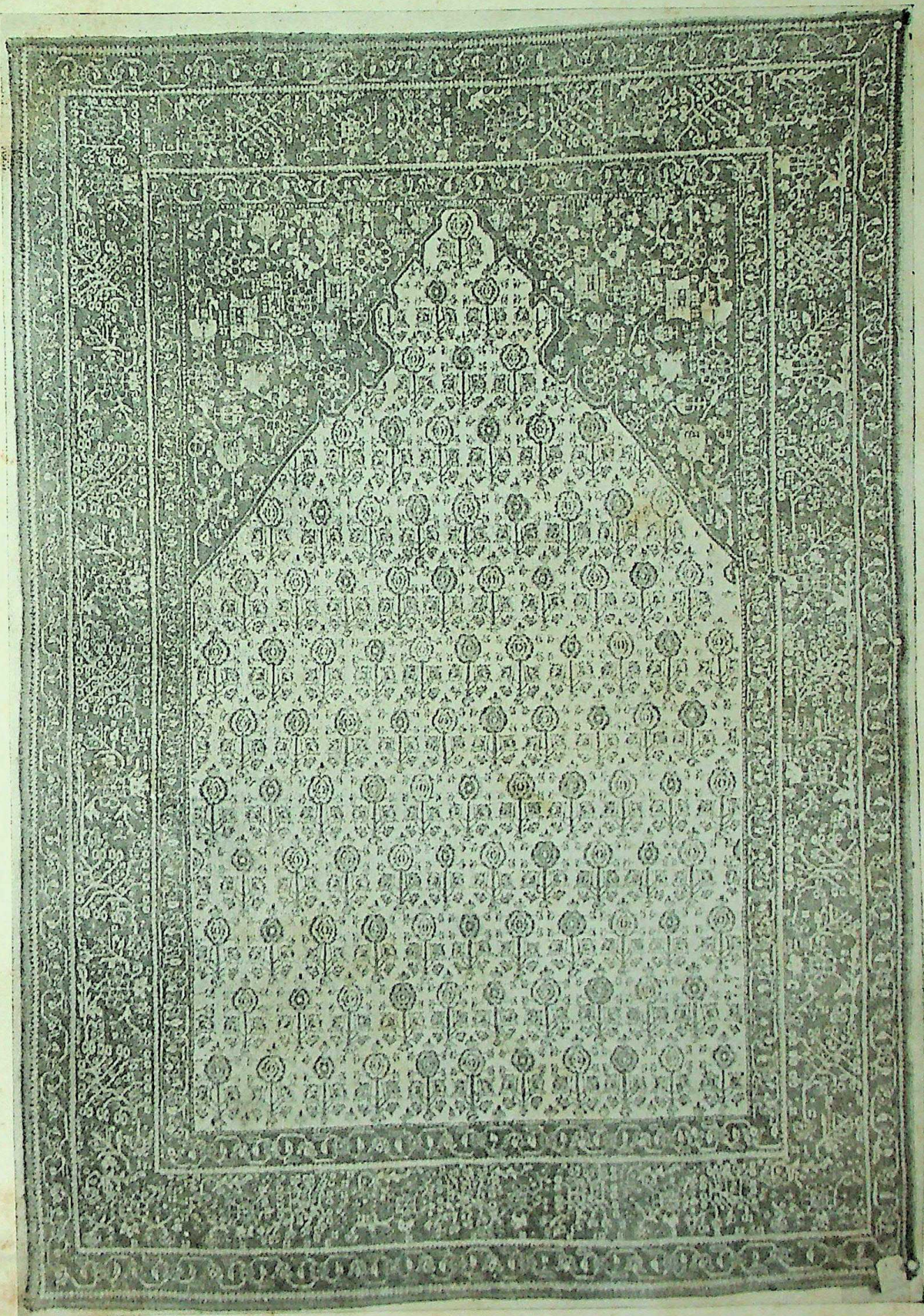
It is only within recent years that any very accurate knowledge of Oriental carpets has been disseminated in this country. The ordinary buyer knows three classes, and only three, which he roughly distinguishes as Turkey, Indian, and Persian carpets. The expert is, of course, a good deal more exact in his classification; but even his knowledge is as yet vague and confused. Carpets, either of cotton, silk, or wool, have during many centuries been used in the Orient, from the South of India to European Turkey, for domestic use, for the prostration of the praying Muslim, and for occasions of State. The carpets employed by the ancients are thought to have been of the nature of tapestry, and to have been chiefly used as loose coverings for couches rather than for floors. True carpets appear to have been early employed in Persia, and those called Turkish were no doubt originally of Persian manufacture, and were gradually exported and at length imitated in Turkey. Kernanshaw in Persia has still a carpet manufacture producing rich, soft, and beautiful goods, the sale of which adds considerably to the wealth of the province; while true Persian carpets are also made at Meshed in the Turkoman country and in Khorassan, and are justly renowned for the exquisite beauty of the patterns and the durability of the colours, which are purely vegetable dyes, comprising, among others, a green which is very difficult to make; it is conjectured to be a subtle combination of saffron and indigo. There is likewise a famous carpet manufacture carried on at Feraboun, near Teheran. The finest of all Persian carpets were formerly made at Herat, and one produced in the Chahal Minar at Ispahan largely exceeded in size the dimensions of the wonderful fabric at South Kensington, inasmuch as its length was a hundred and forty feet and its width seventy feet. The majority of these exceptionally vast and gorgeous products of the loom were destined either for the adornment of Royal palaces or the glorification of the holy Kaaba, or some scarcely less venerated shrine. Sometimes the entire interior of a mosque, such as that at Meshed Ali, was hung with superb carpets; and the Mihrab or niche towards Mecca was always a favourite object for such ornamentation. Mats or rugs of a much less costly nature were spread on the floors. With respect to the ordinary Oriental carpets, they may be roughly divided into two classes, the floral and the geometrical; and the former is the design affected by the higher and Aryan races, the last being preferred by the lower and Turanian races.

The beautiful Persian carpet at South Kensington may, it is to be hoped, become a most valuable factor in technical art education in this country. Some humourist once said of a Turkish carpet that its pattern resembled nothing visible in the heavens above or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth; and, to a slight extent, this hyperbolic disparagement is justifiable in the case of the Turkoman carpets for which Vambéry saw the old woman tracing the pattern in sand. The girls employed in carpet-weaving would obviously prick or chalk down on the particular piece of textile fabric assigned to them so much of the pattern as they were expected to weave, and these hasty sketches might in many cases deviate from the original model. Scores of workers were often employed in as many cottages in making these detached portions, which, when sewn together, may have presented a slightly mixed appearance, the incongruity of which was at the same time happily modified by the predominant traditions of design and colour which had come down to the people from remote ages. The pattern of the Ardabil carpet seems to be one perfectly distinct and regular, and, even did it present some slight obscurities, the puzzle could be easily cleared up by a careful and minute analysis and dissection of the whole work by the aid of practical geometry and conventional botany. It is curious to learn that, at the very period when Maksoud of Kashan, the slave of the "Holy Place," was completing the Ardabil carpet the manufacture of these commodities was first introduced into England by one William Sheldon, under the direct patronage of Henry VIII. The manufacture, nevertheless, was for many years exclusively confined to its use as tapestry or arras for the decoration of walls. The apartments of the palaces of Queen Elizabeth were hung with the costliest products of the Flemish looms, but her Majesty had certainly no carpets on the floors of her presence chambers or her banqueting halls. The floors were simply laid with rushes. The Oriental custom has always been and still is to employ carpets as hangings for shrines and porches, as coverlets for couches, and as rugs lying loose on the floor; and this sensible system, which has been largely adopted among us since the extension of the trade in Oriental rugs, will, in all probability, be still further developed by the technical as well as by the æsthetic teaching of the splendid carpet at South Kensington.

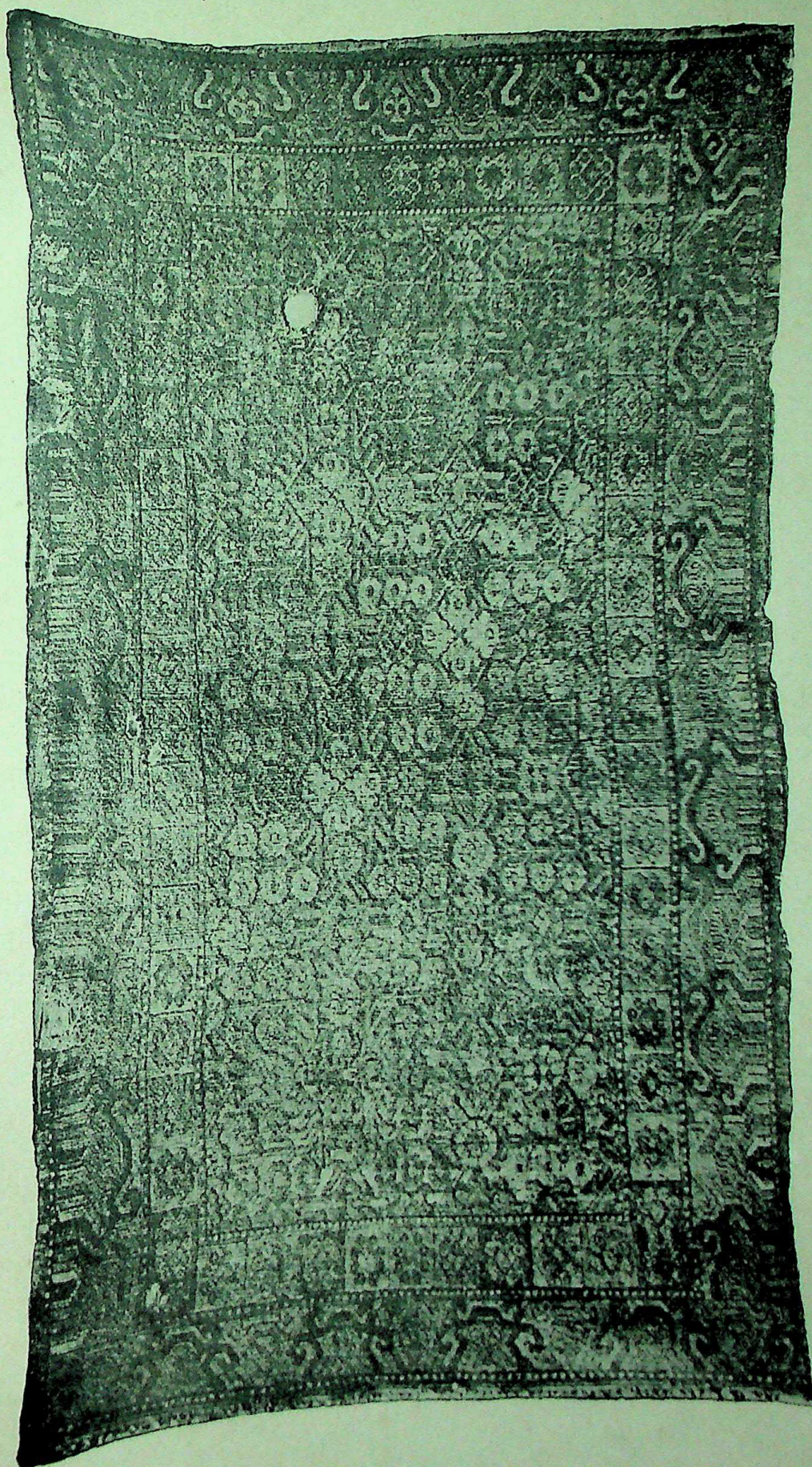
¹ Bought for £2500, of which £750 was contributed by A. W. Franks, Esq., C.B., E. Steinkopff, Esq., William Morris, Esq., and J. E. Taylor, Esq.

LONDON:

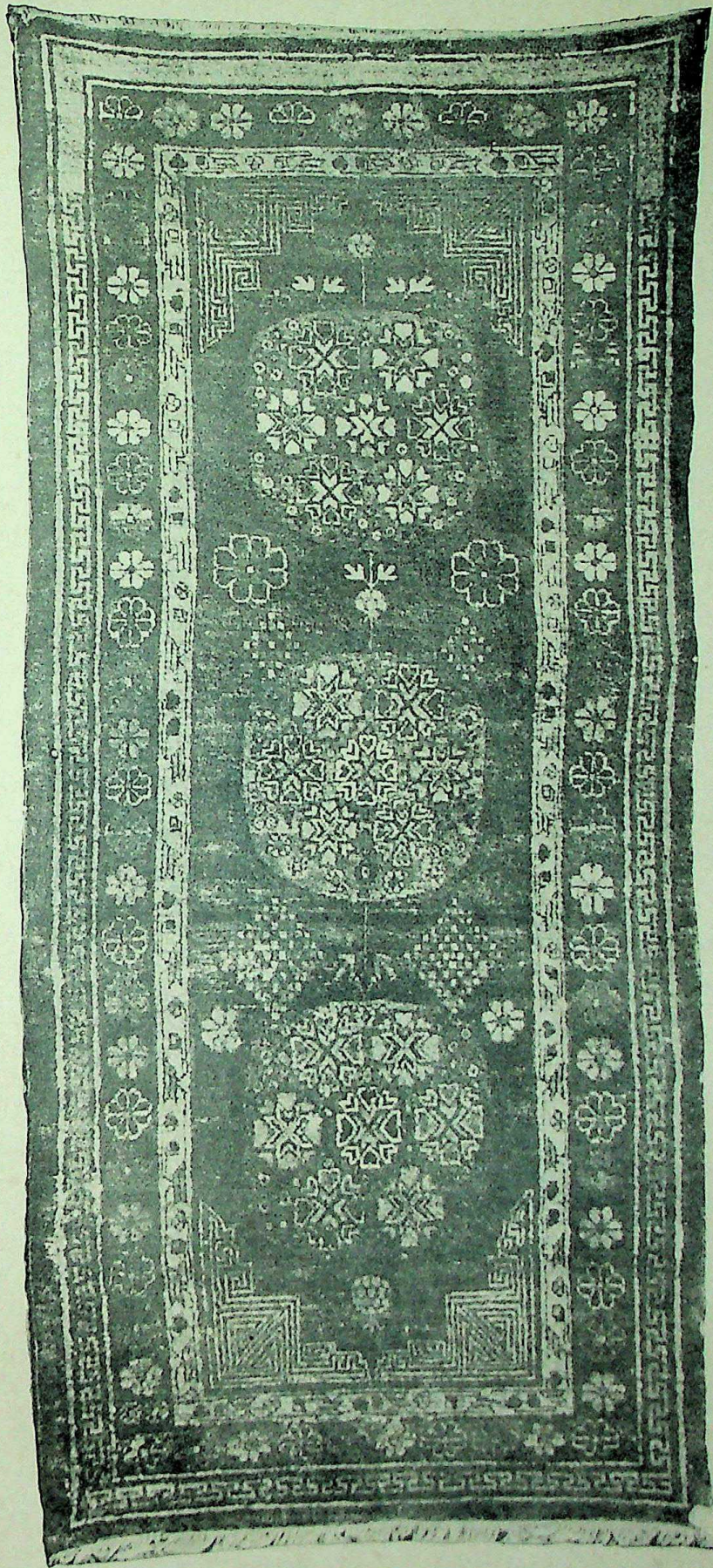
W. GRIGGS & SONS, 14, HANOVER STREET, PECKHAM, S.E.
AND BERNARD QUARITCH, 15 PICCADILLY, W.



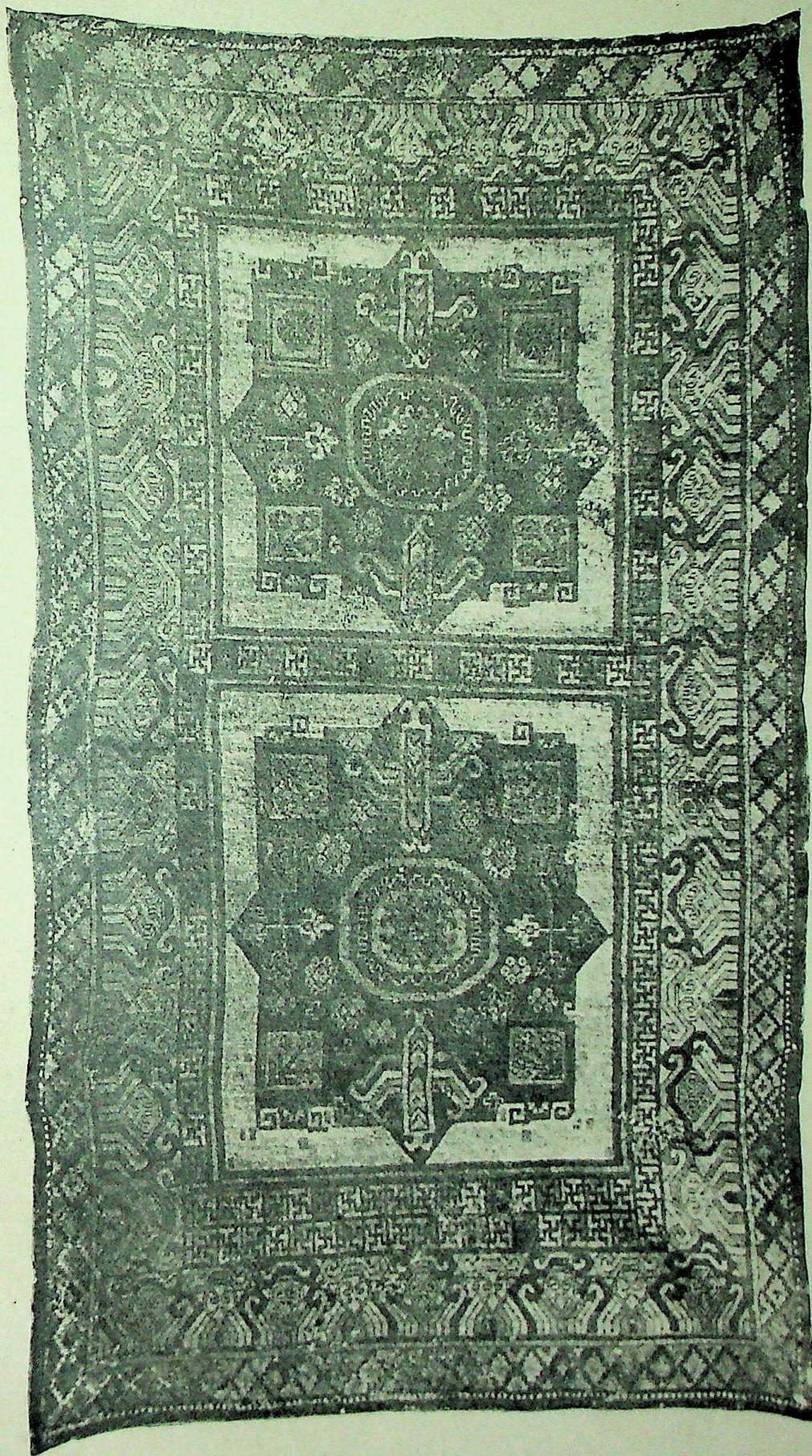
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Reproduced at Agra.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand.

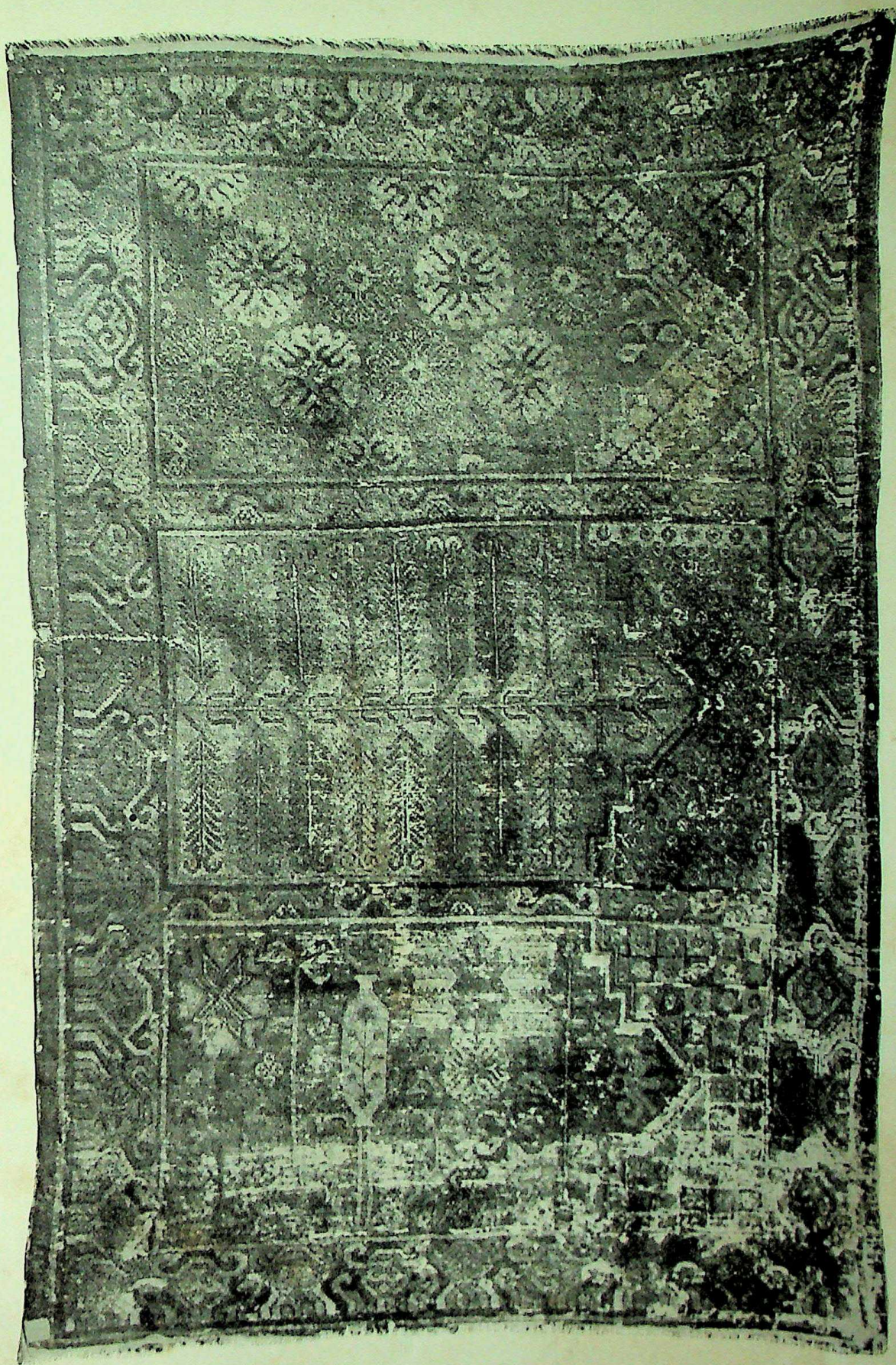


WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand.

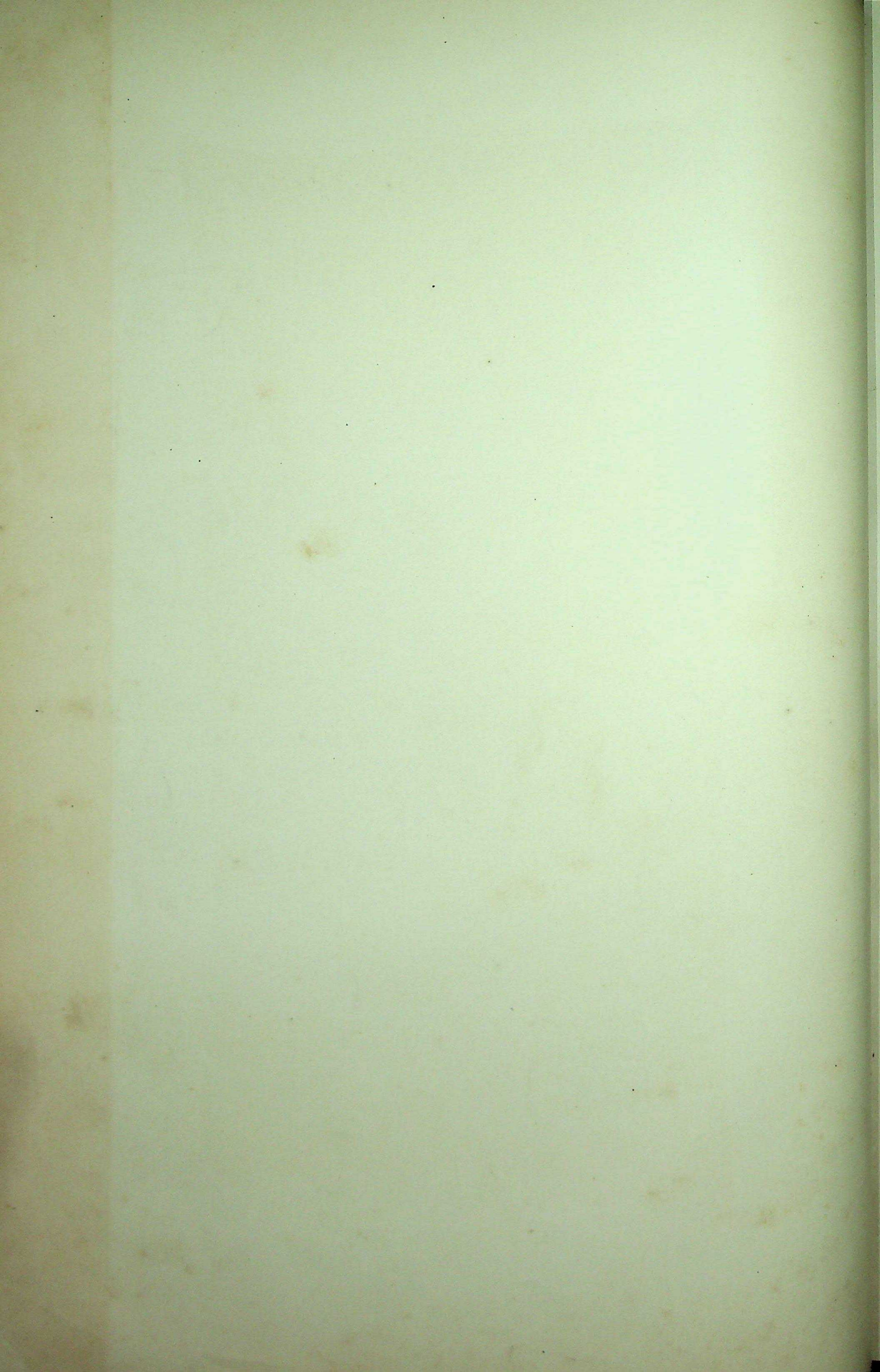


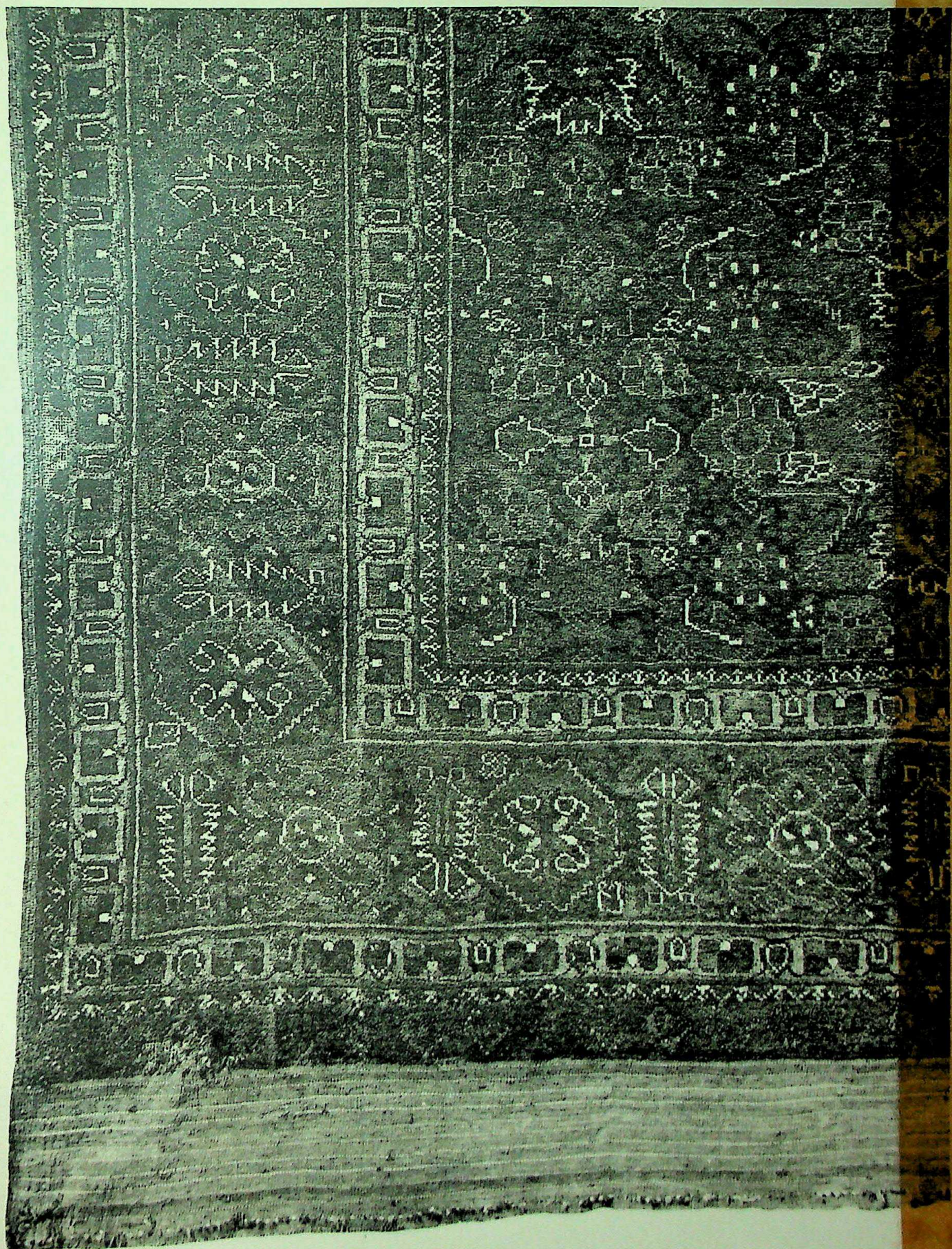
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand.



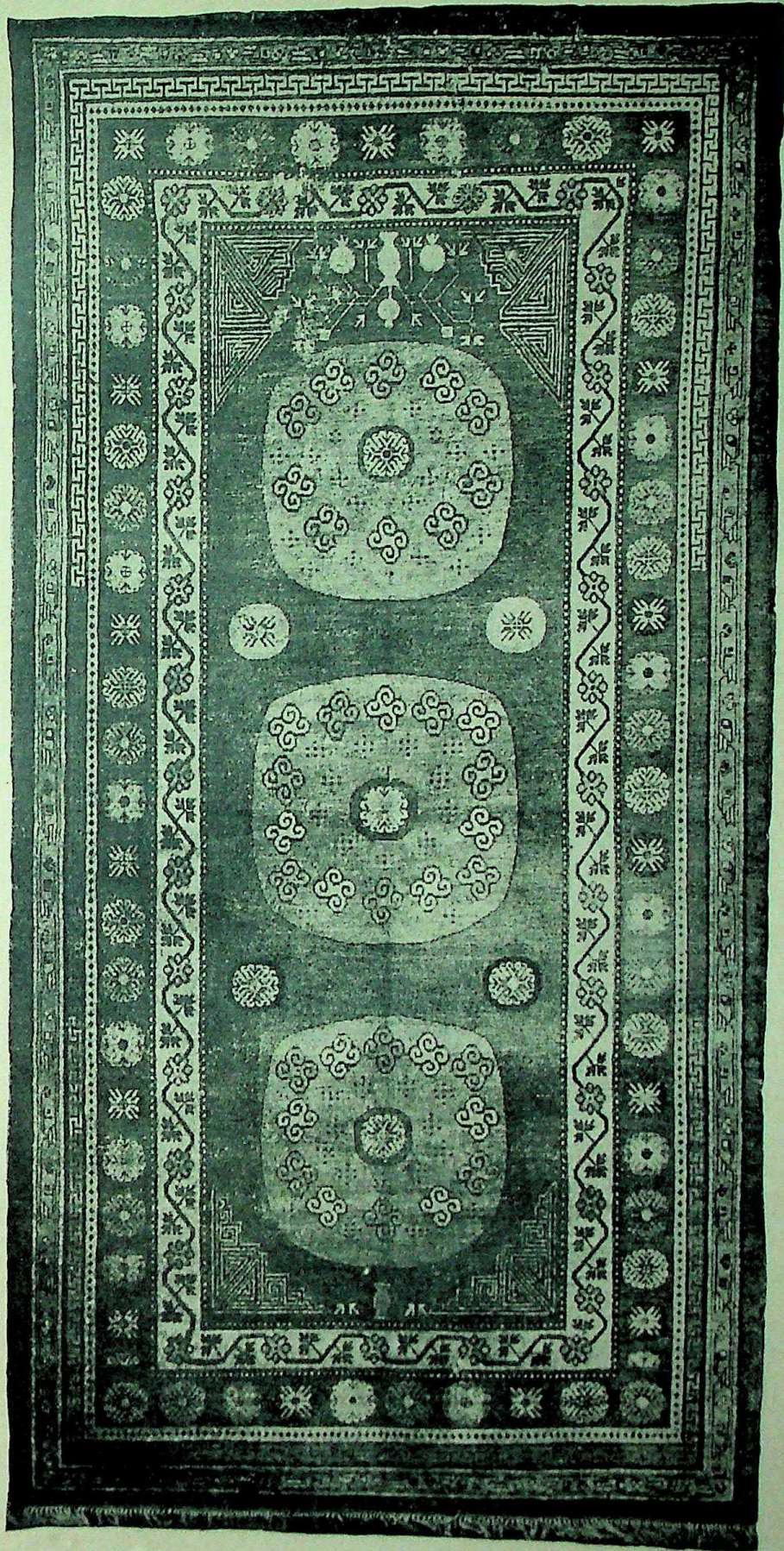


WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand.

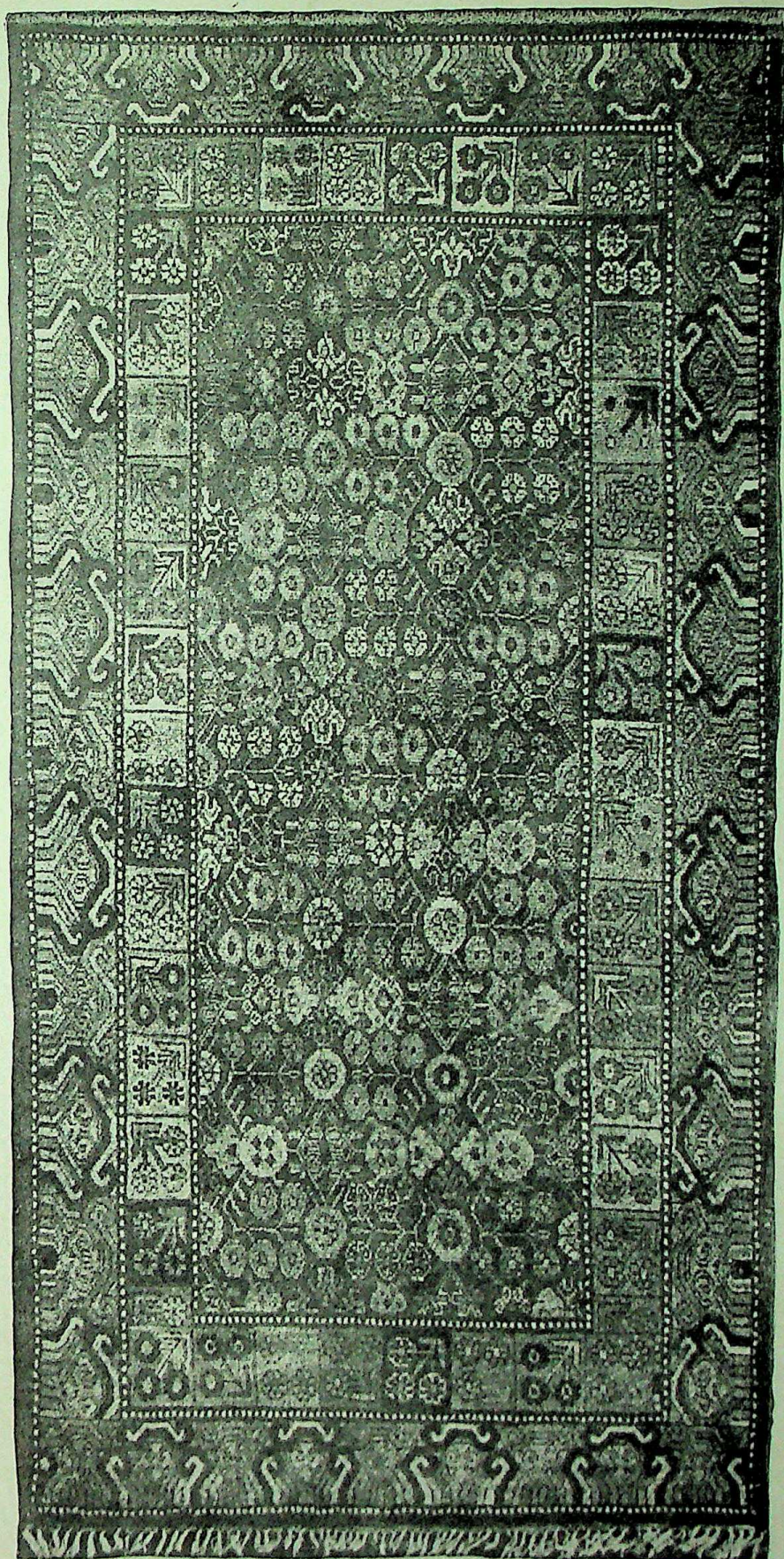




WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Afghanistan.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand, Eastern Turkestan. 19th century.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand, Eastern Turkestan. 19th century.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Srinagar.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Kashmir.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Vellore.



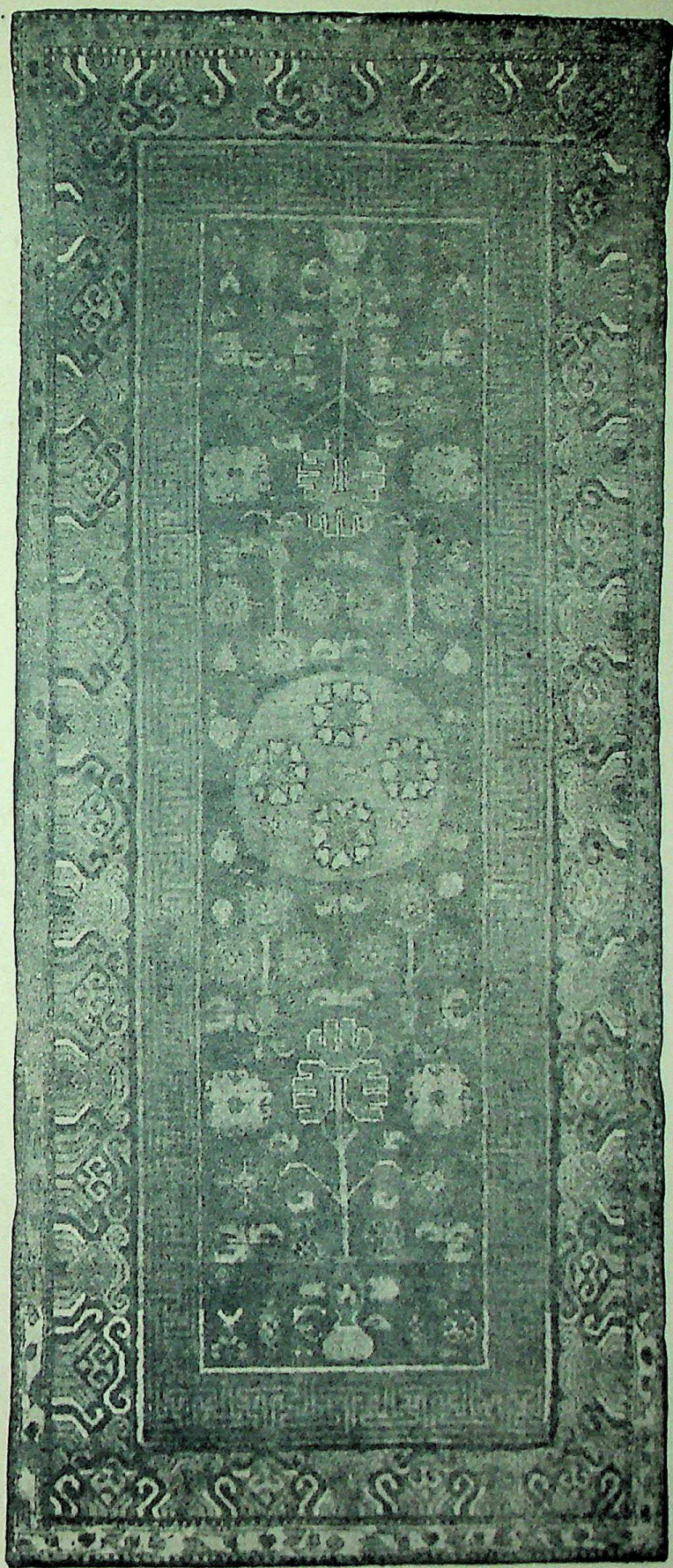
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Multan.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand.



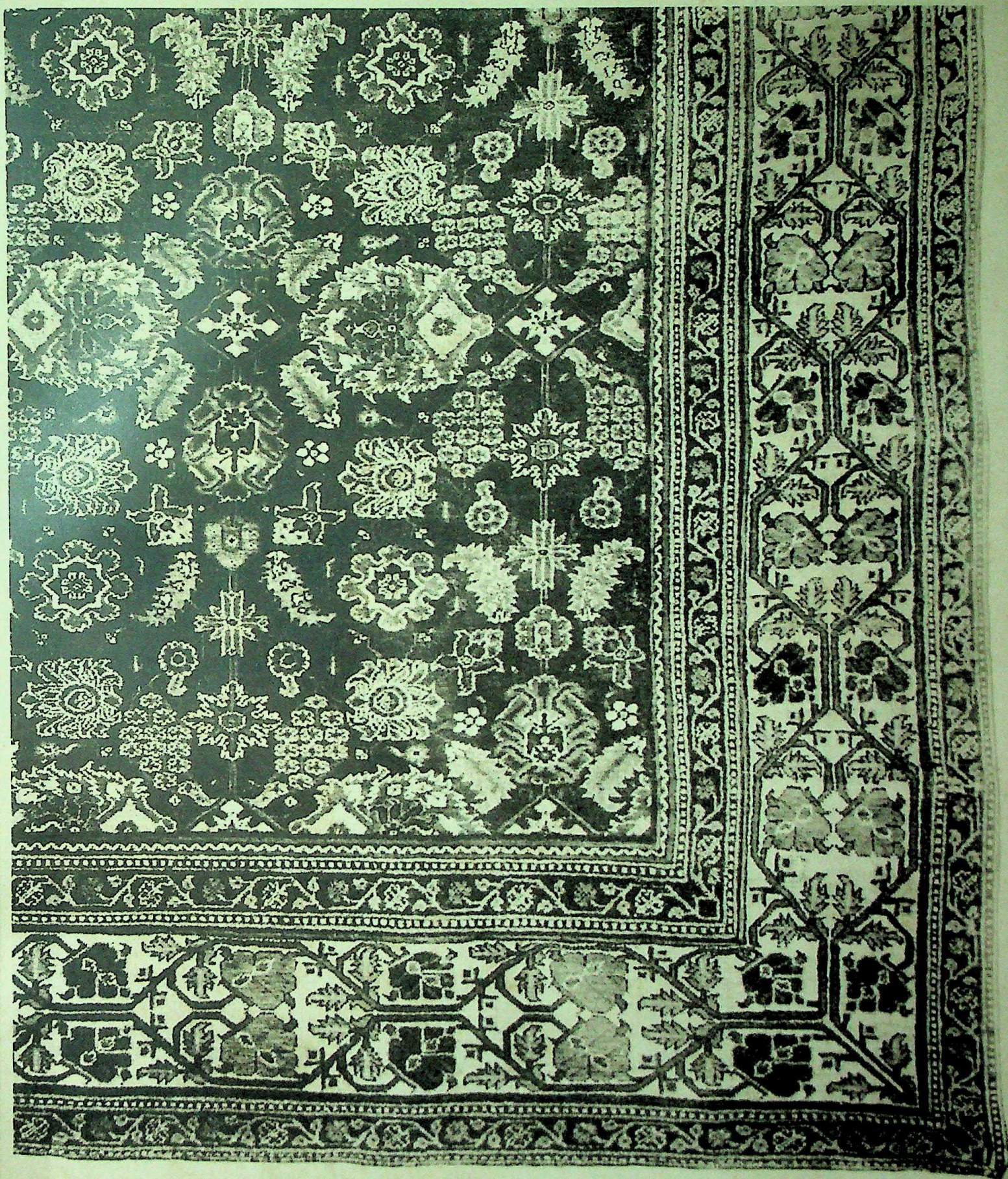
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Reproduced in North Arcot.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand.



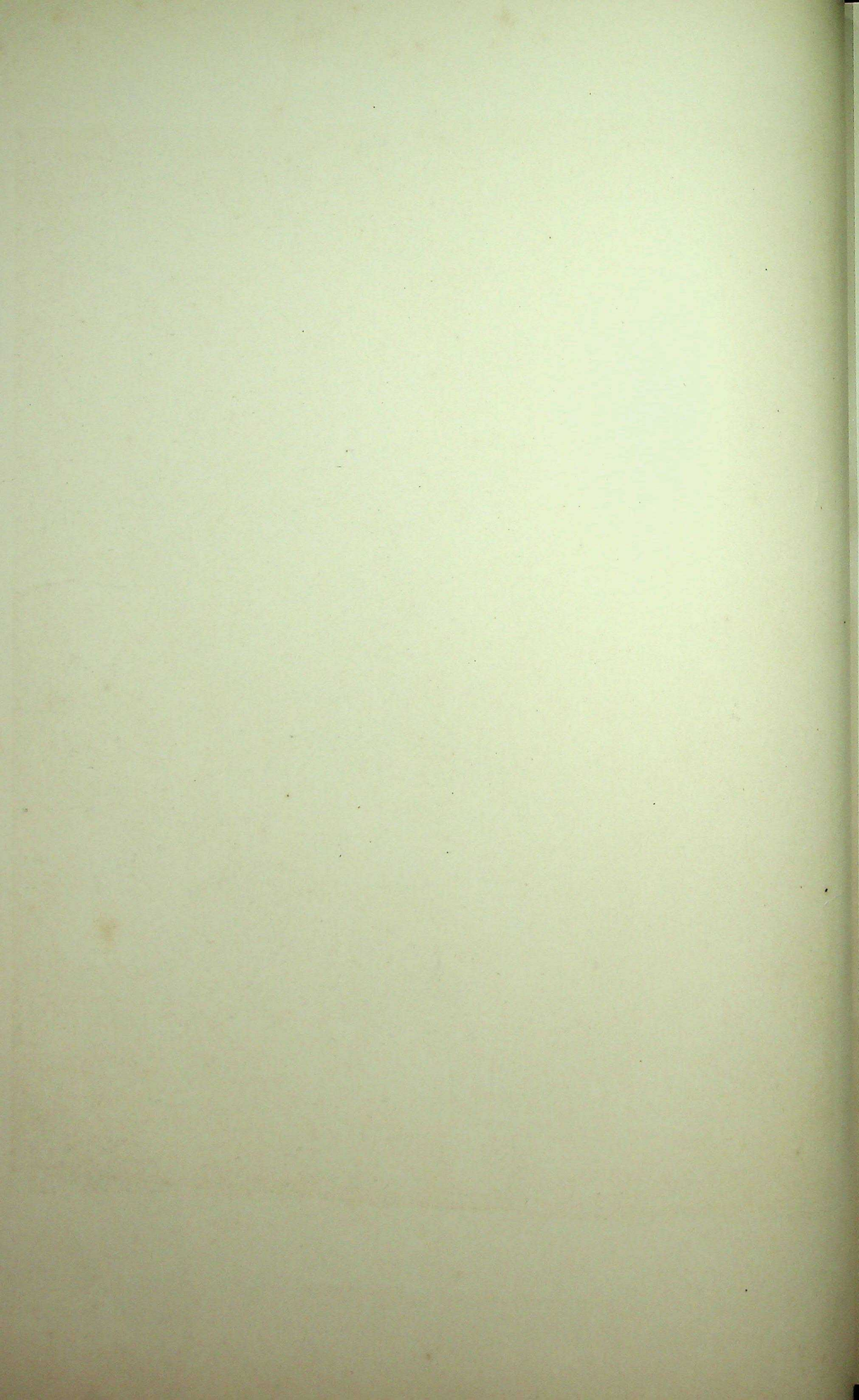
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Bangalore.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Reproduced in North Arcot.

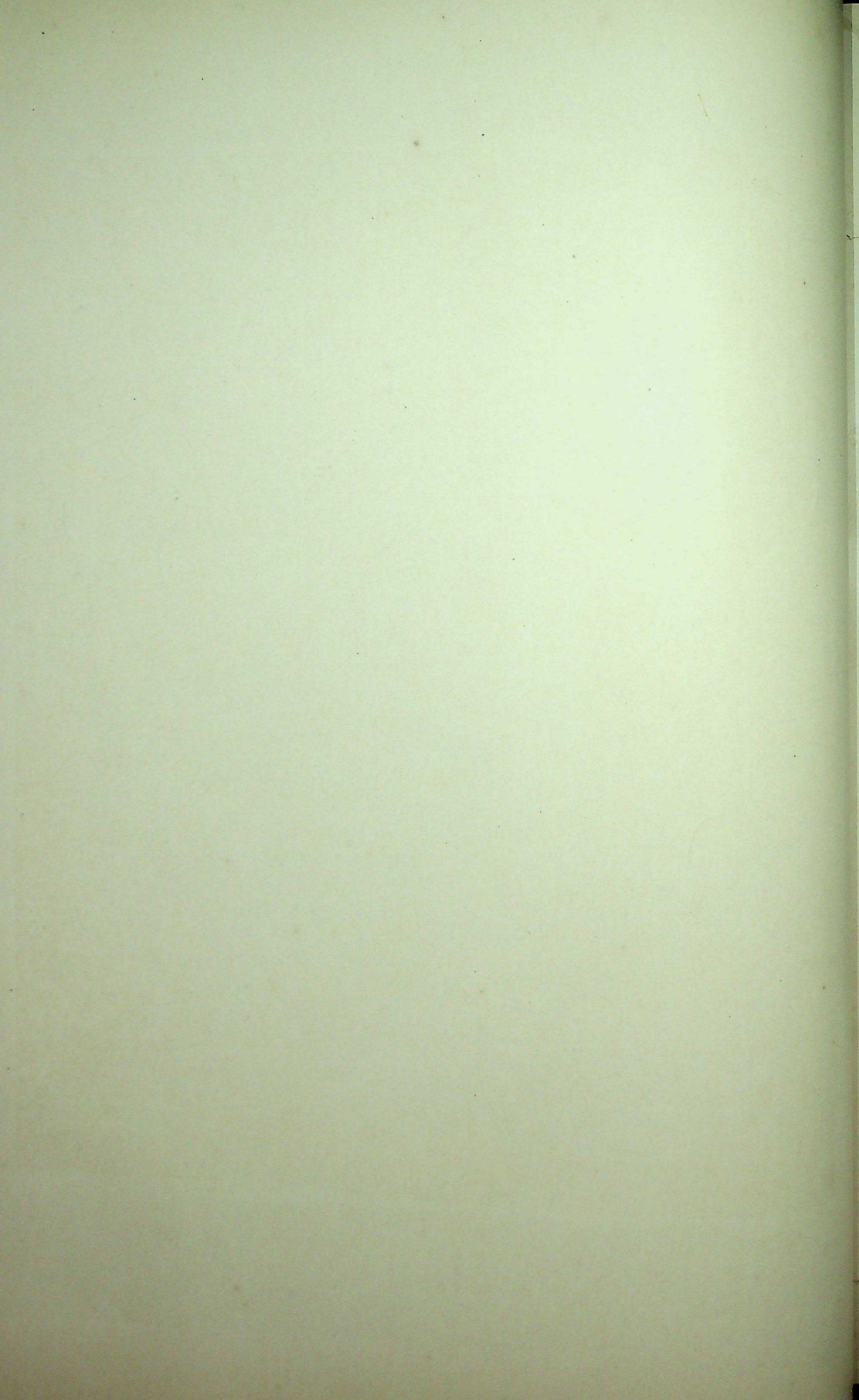


WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Panjab.



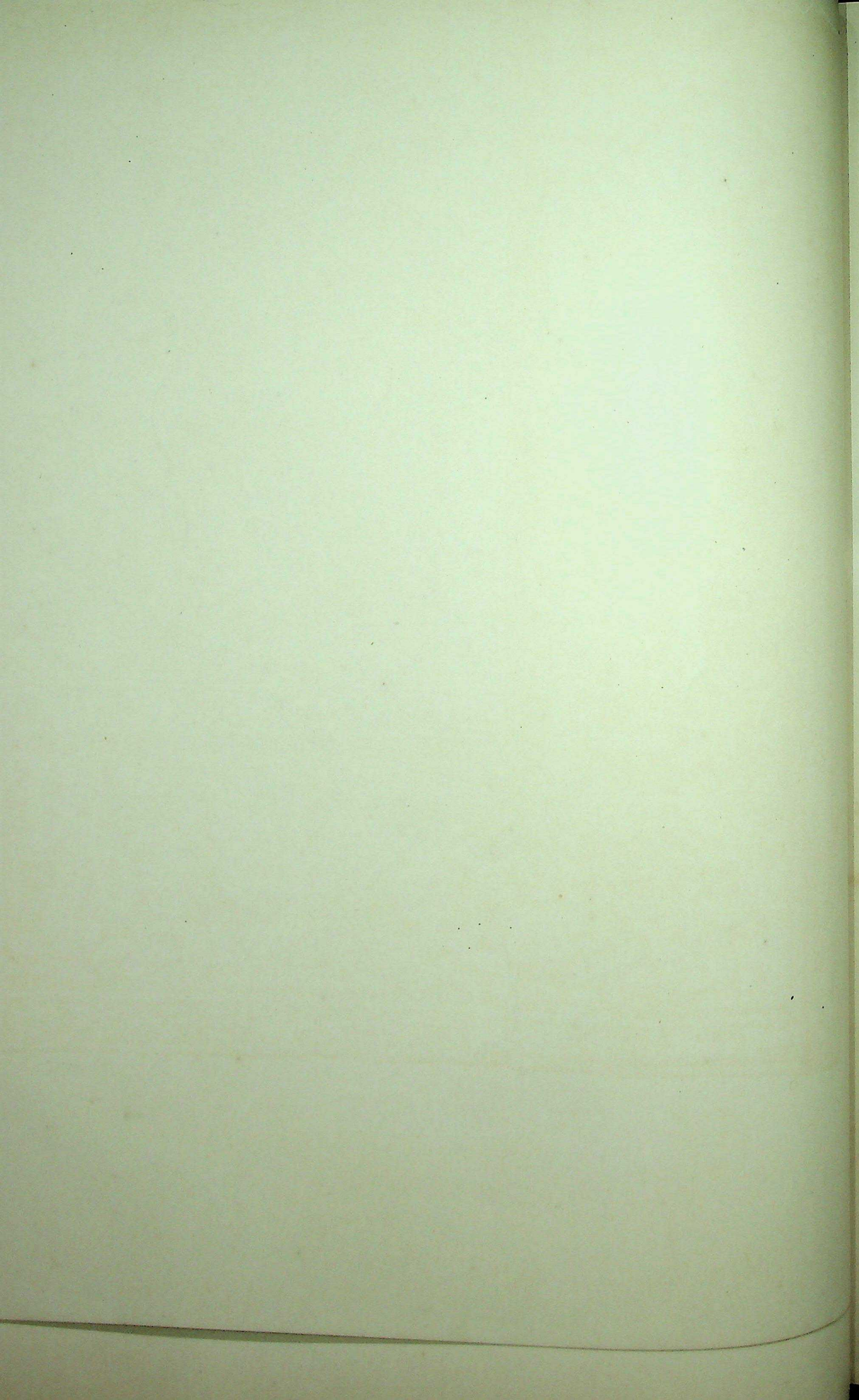


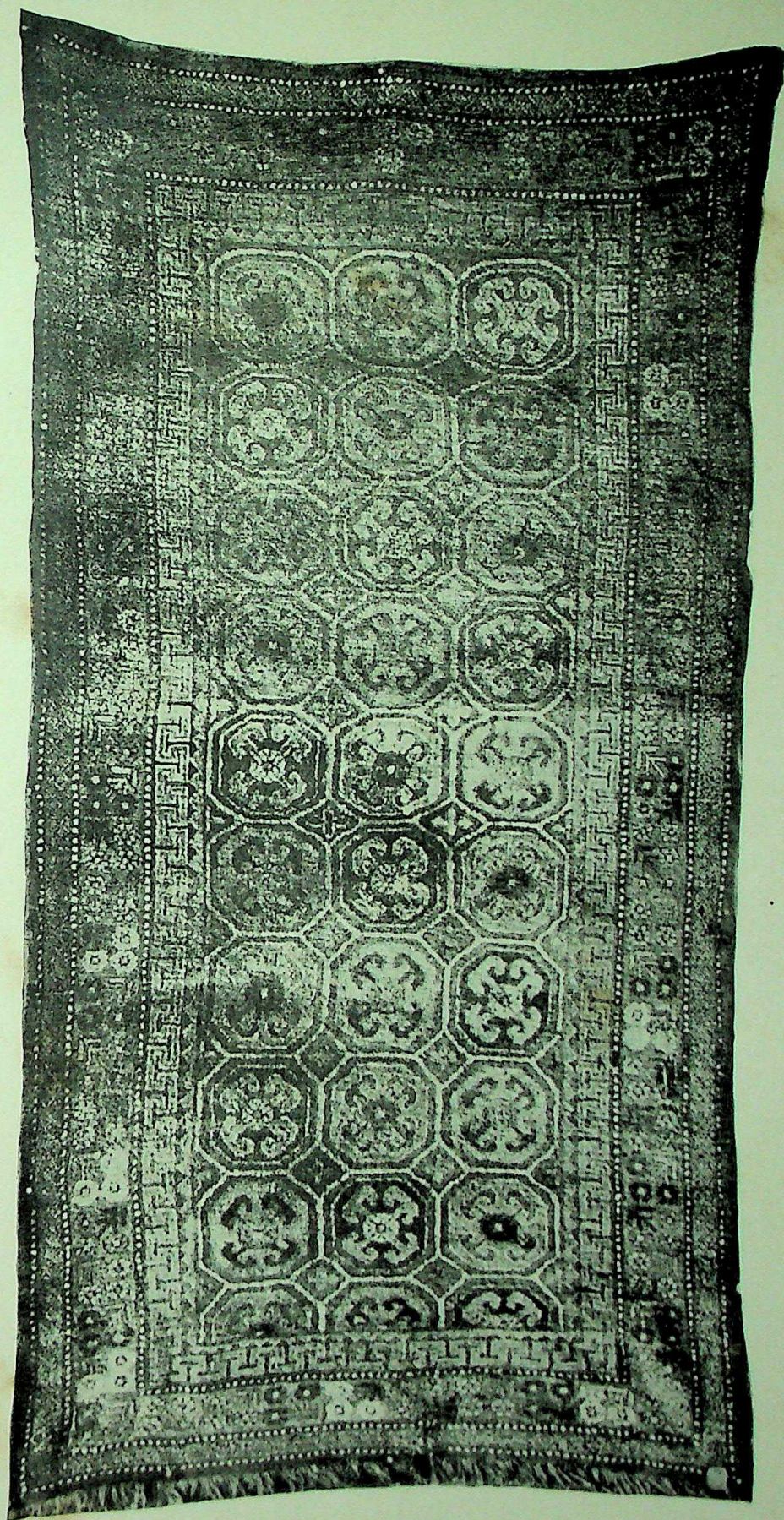
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Kashmir.



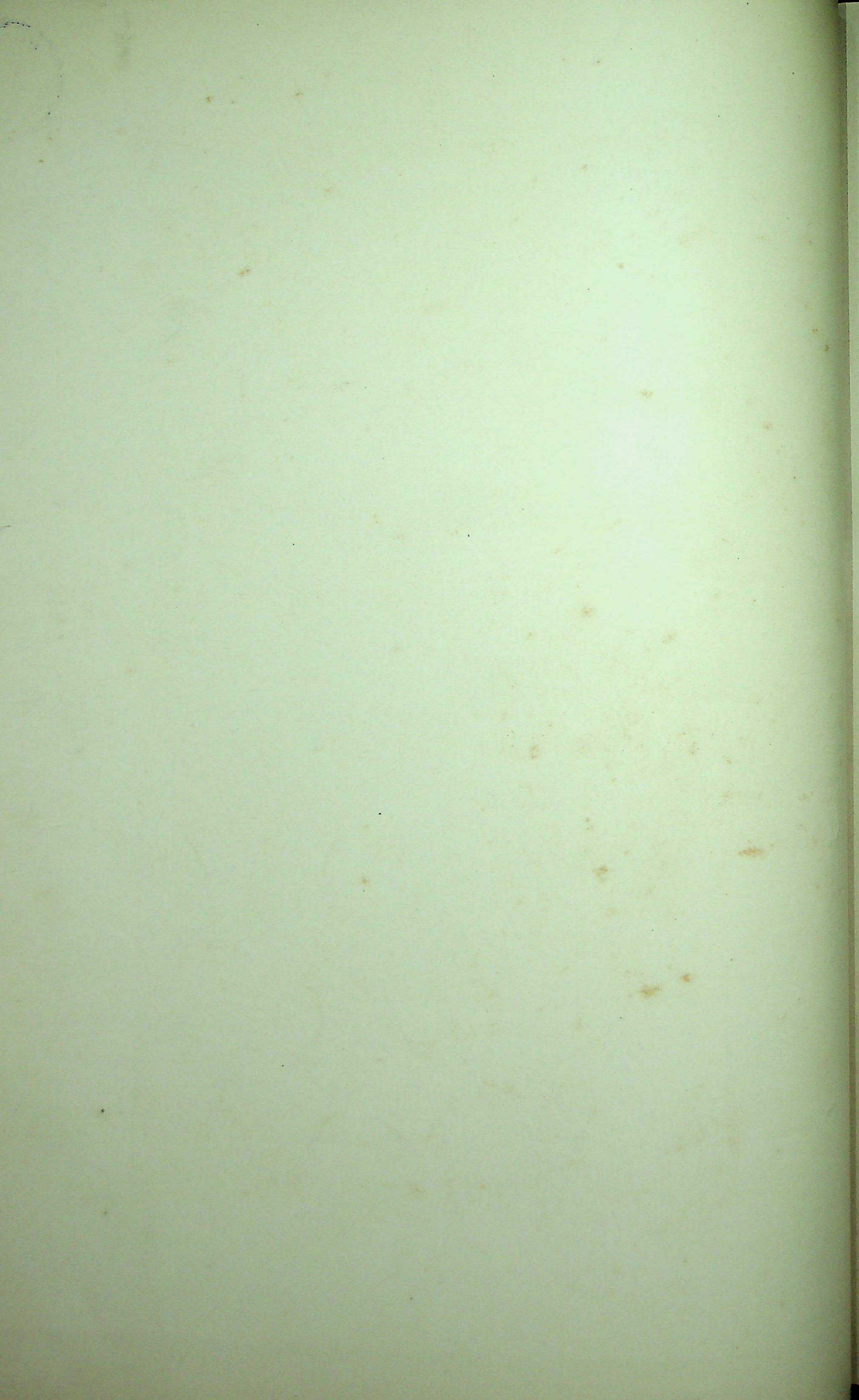


WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Panjab.





WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand

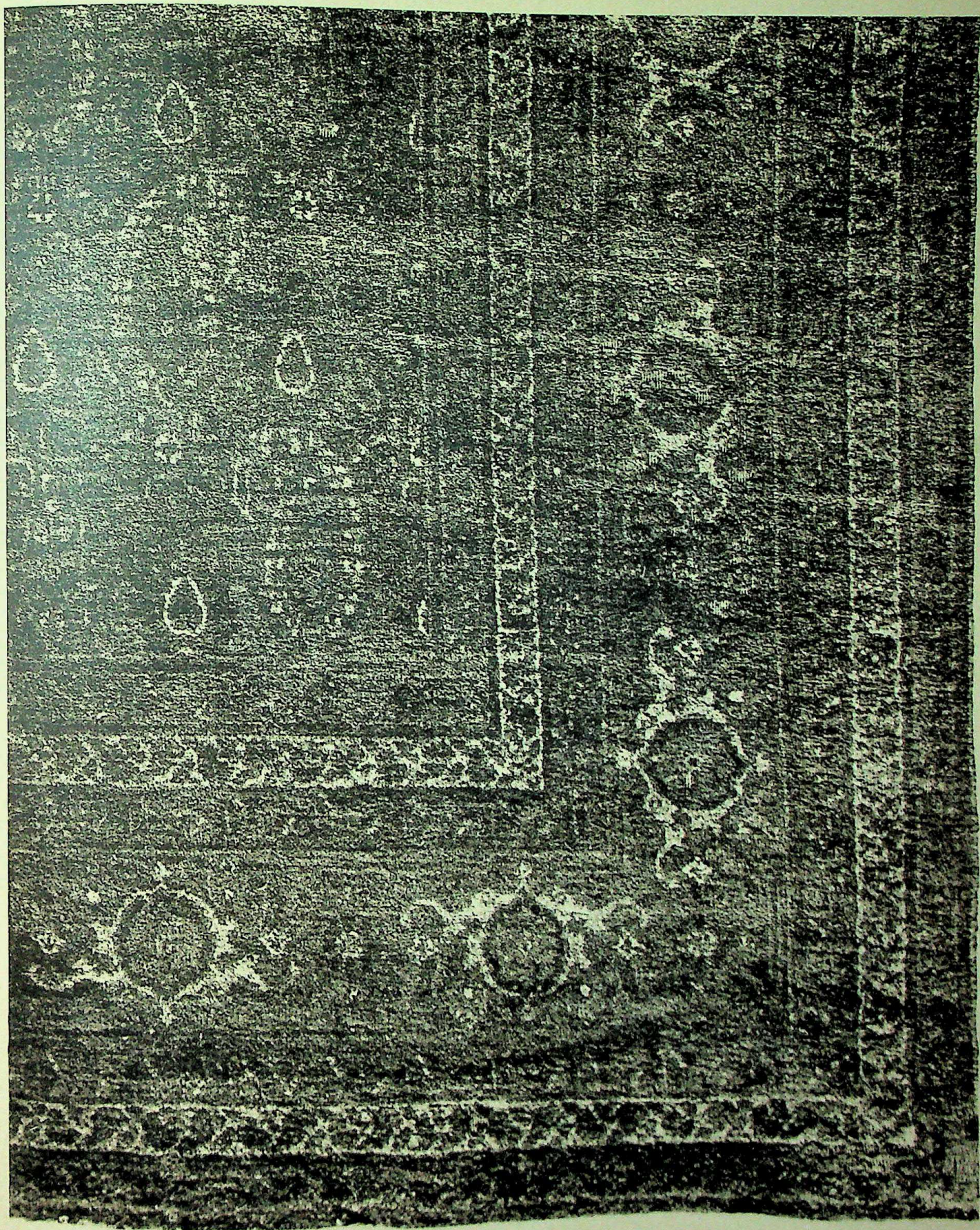




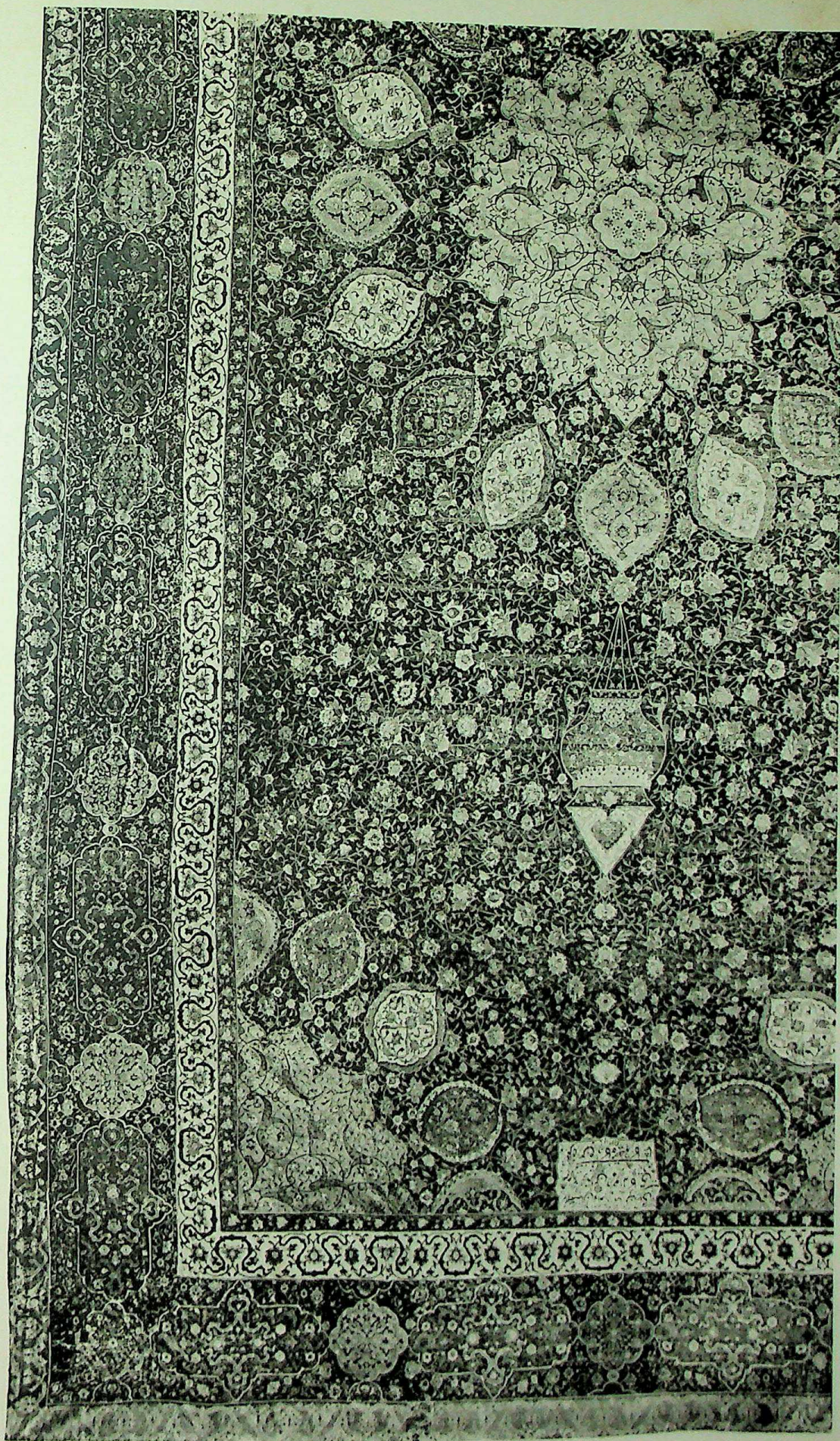
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Mogul; 16th century.



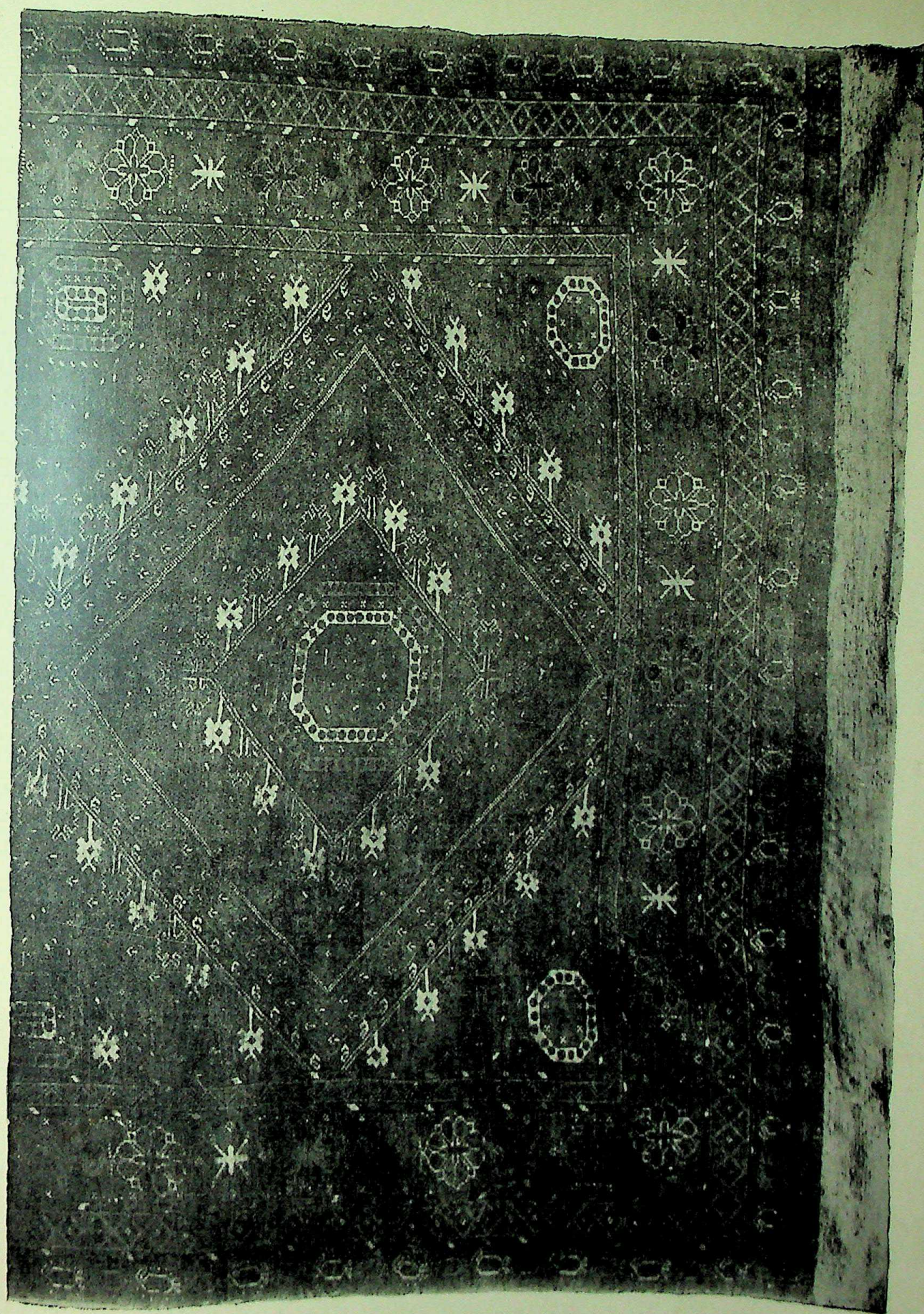
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Mogul; 16th century.



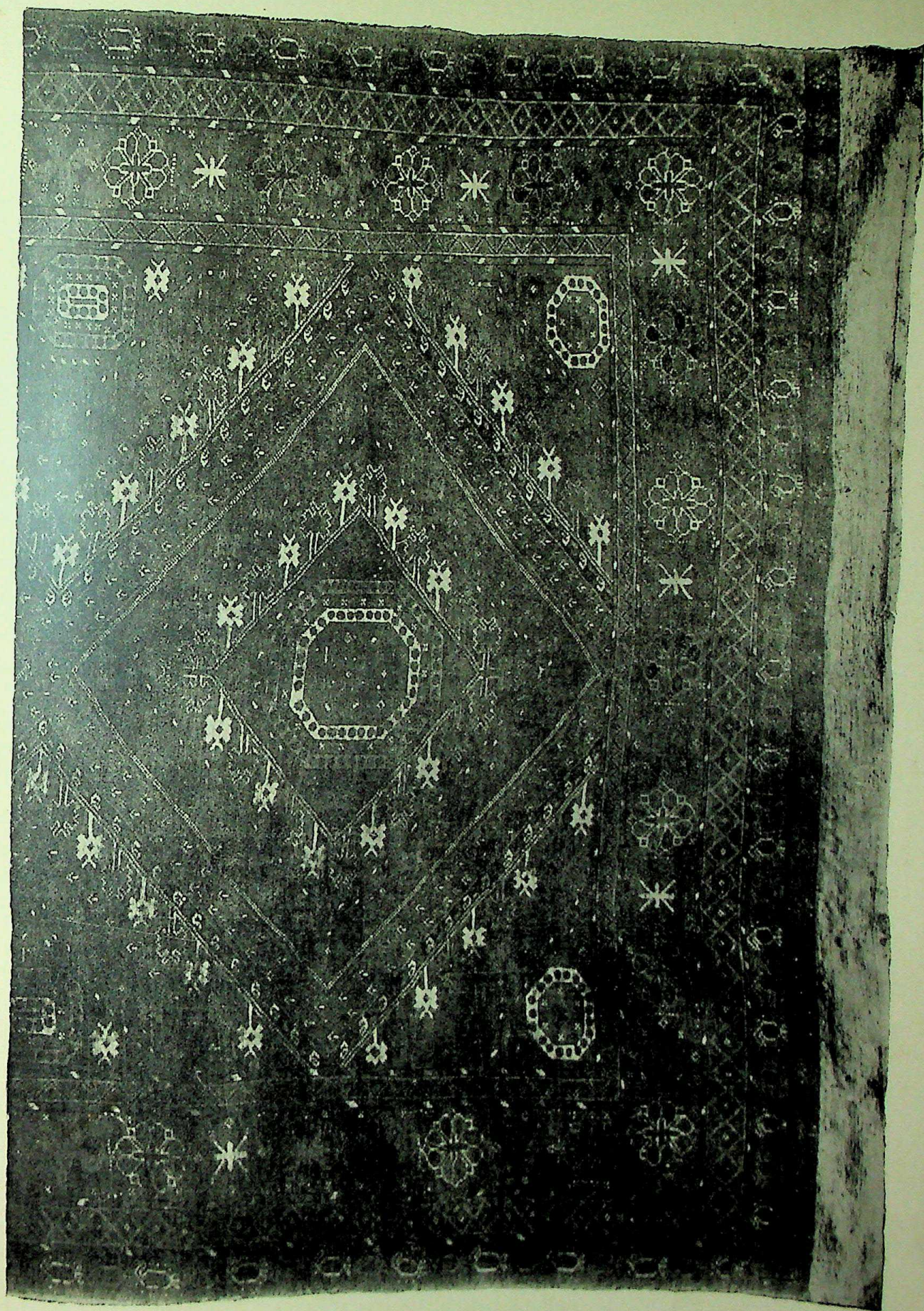
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Lahore.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Ardabil, Persia.



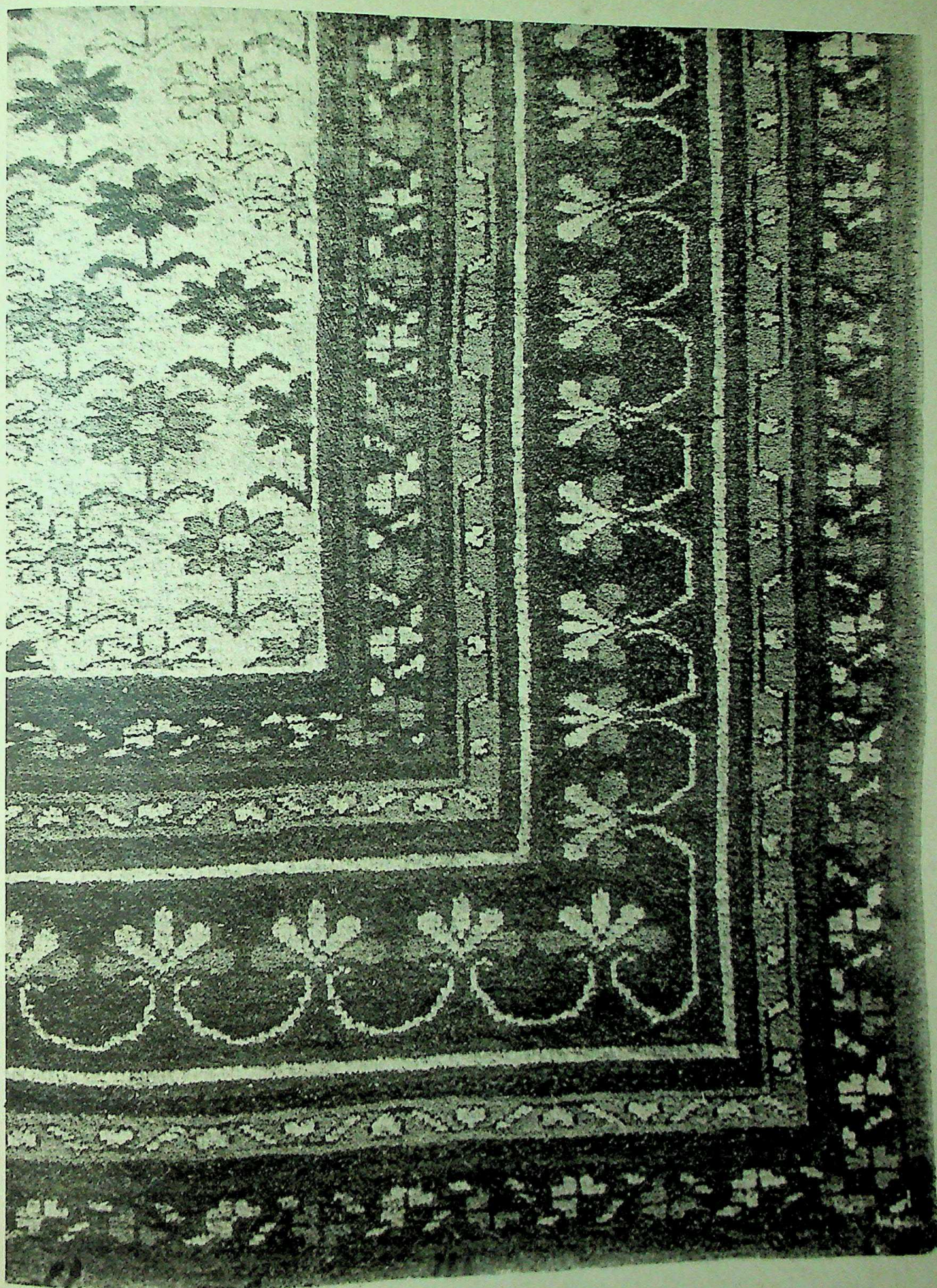
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Afghanistan.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Afghanistan.



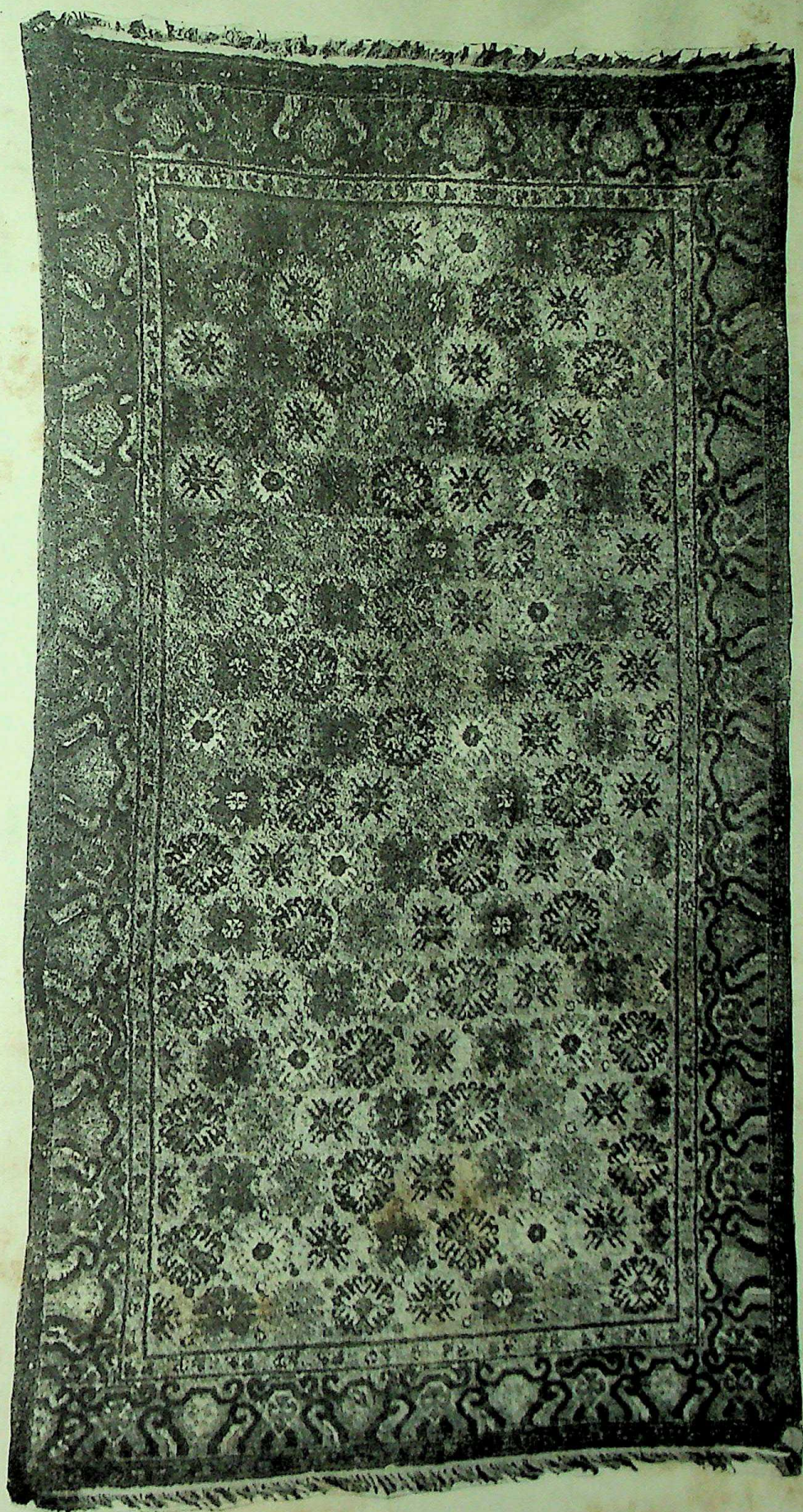
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Afghanistan.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Mirzapur.



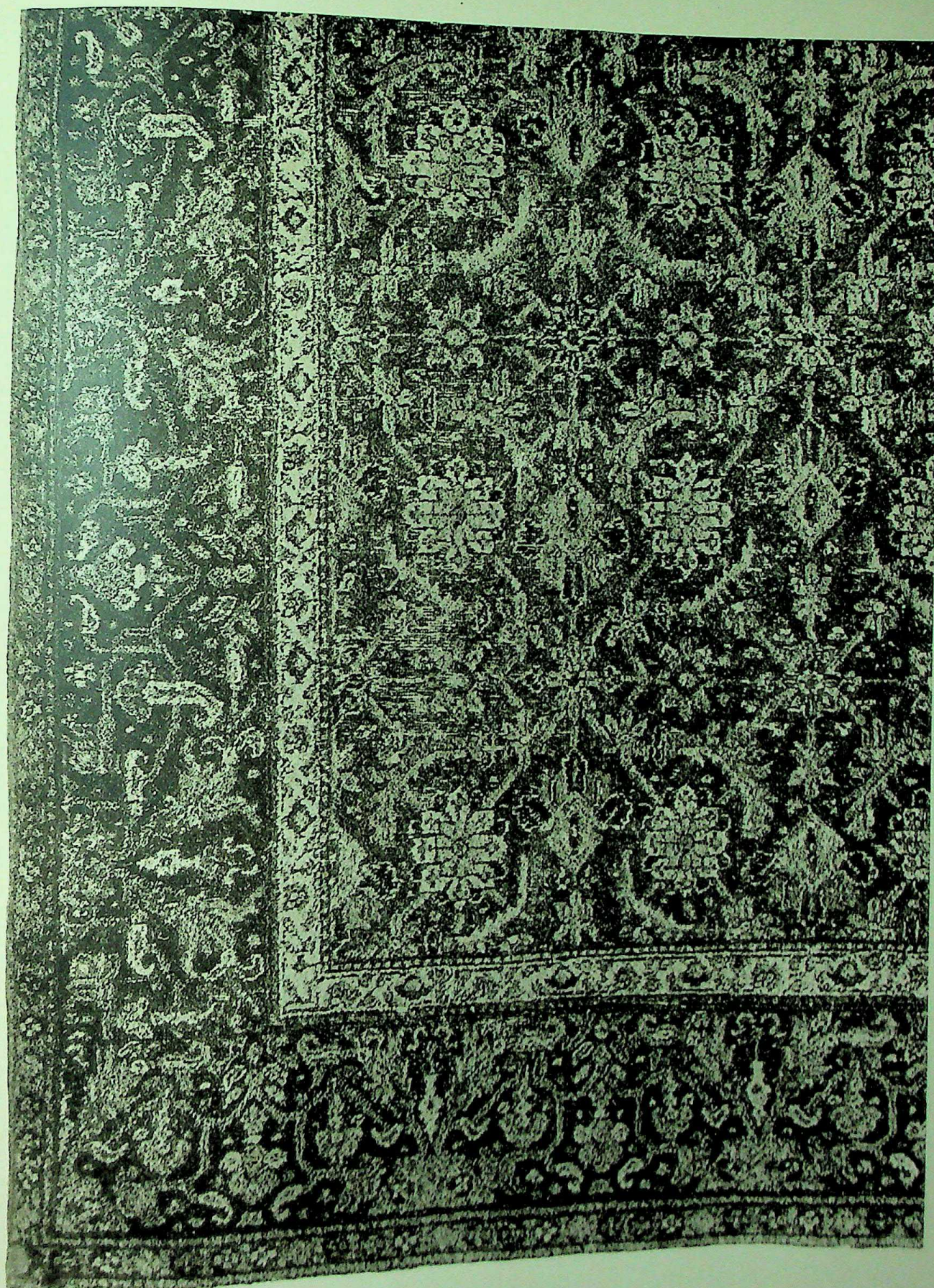
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Yarkand, Eastern Turkestan



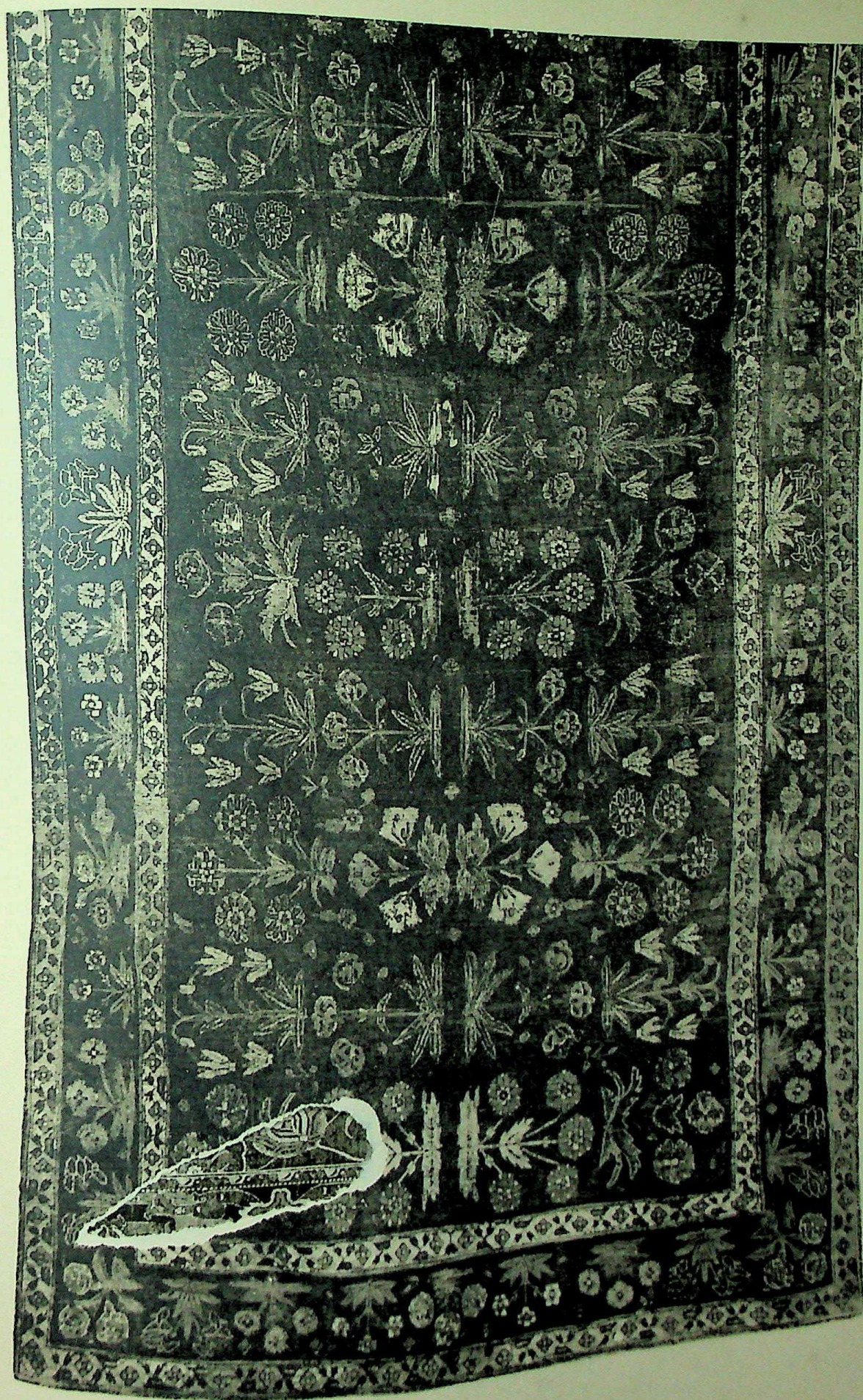
WOOLLEN CARPET. Elura.



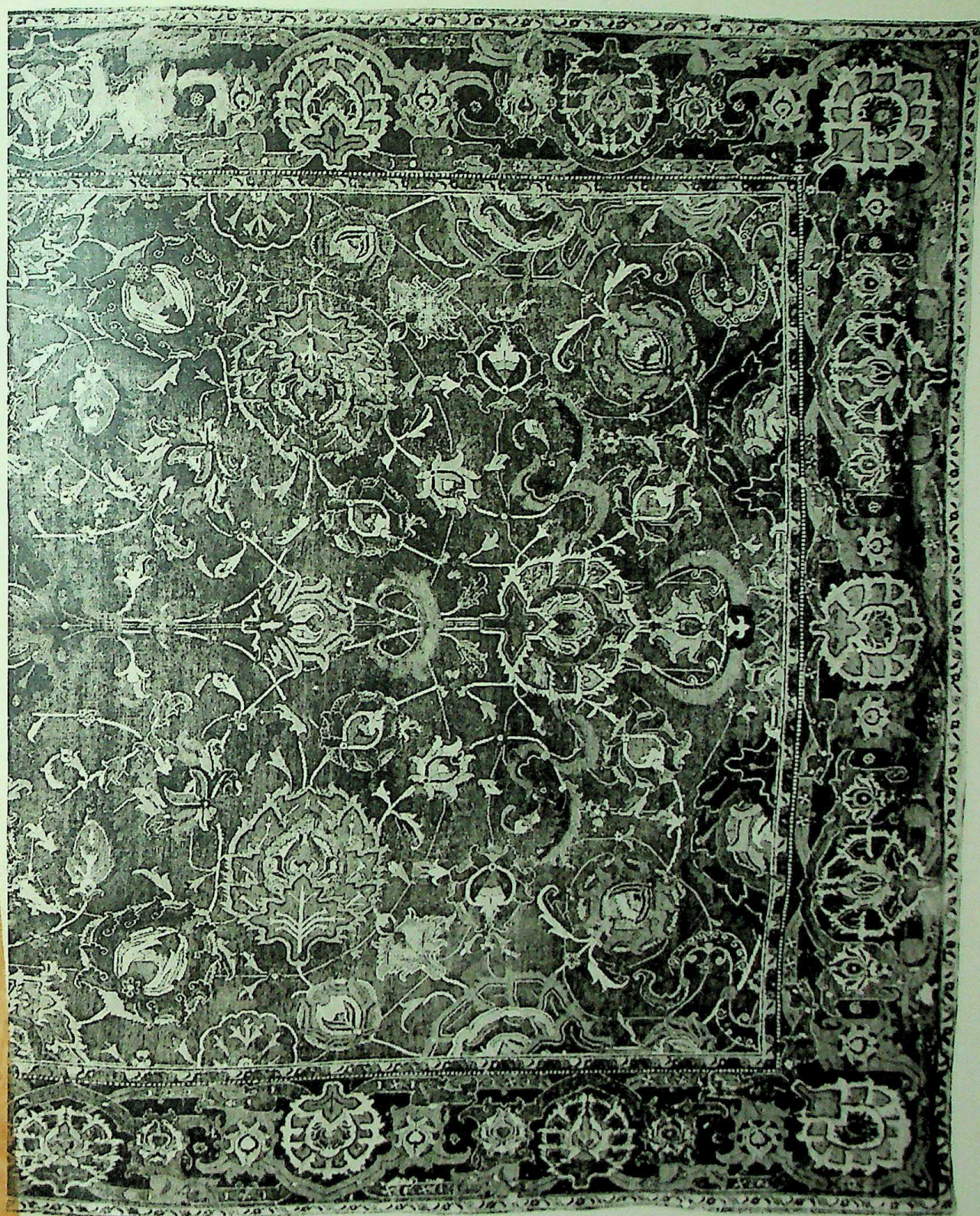
WOOLLEN CARPET. Kashmir.



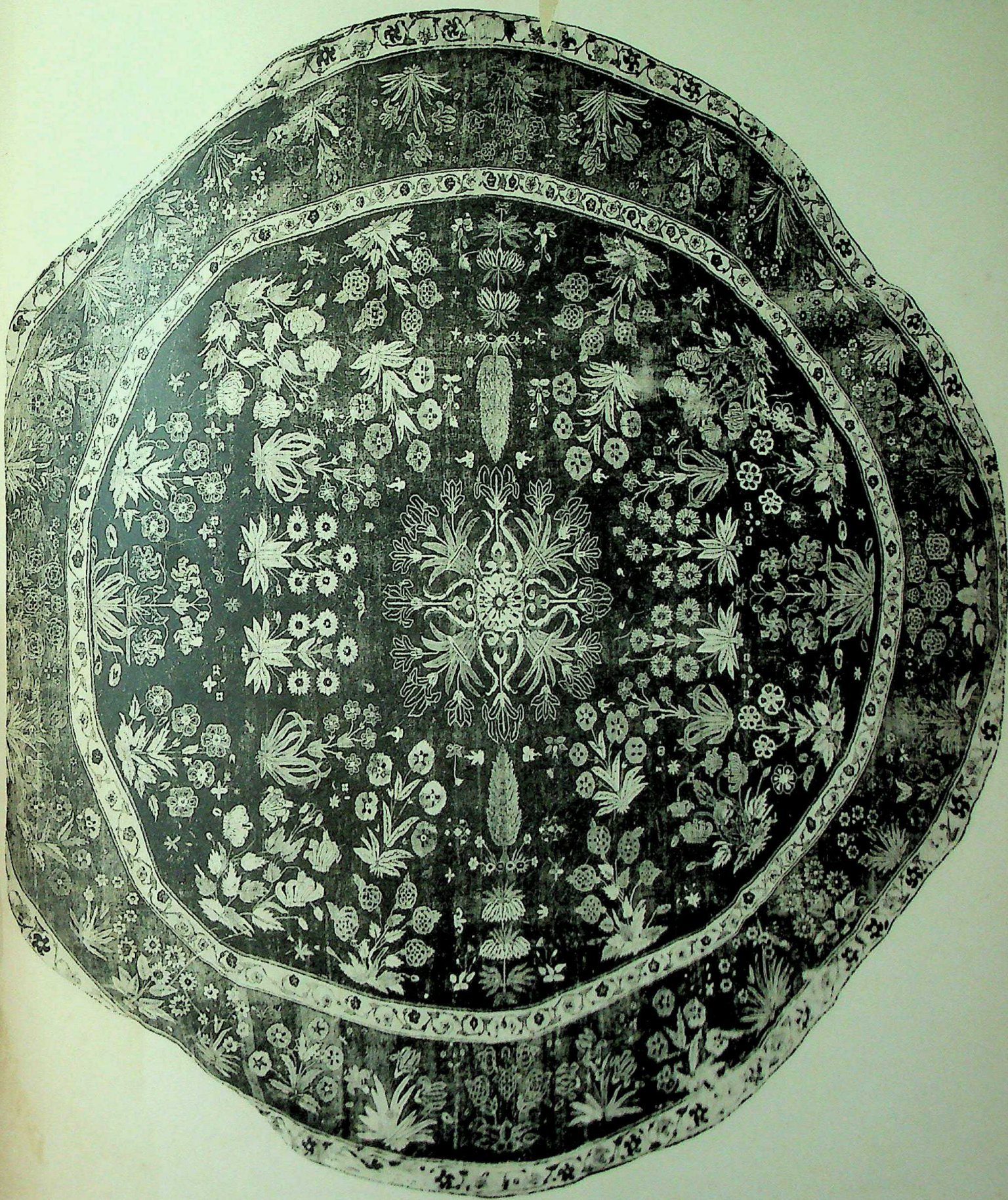
COTTON CARPET. Multan.



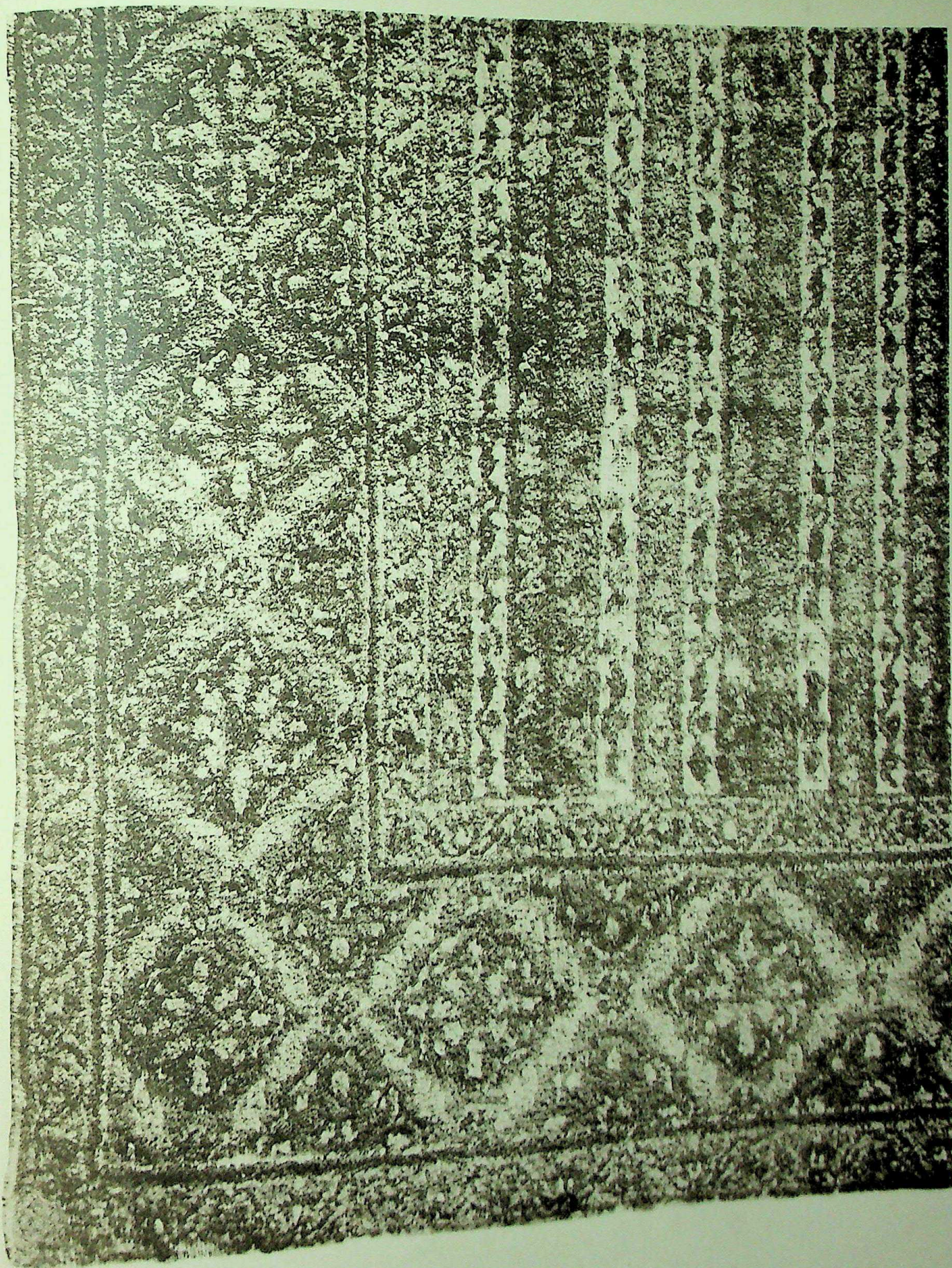
WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



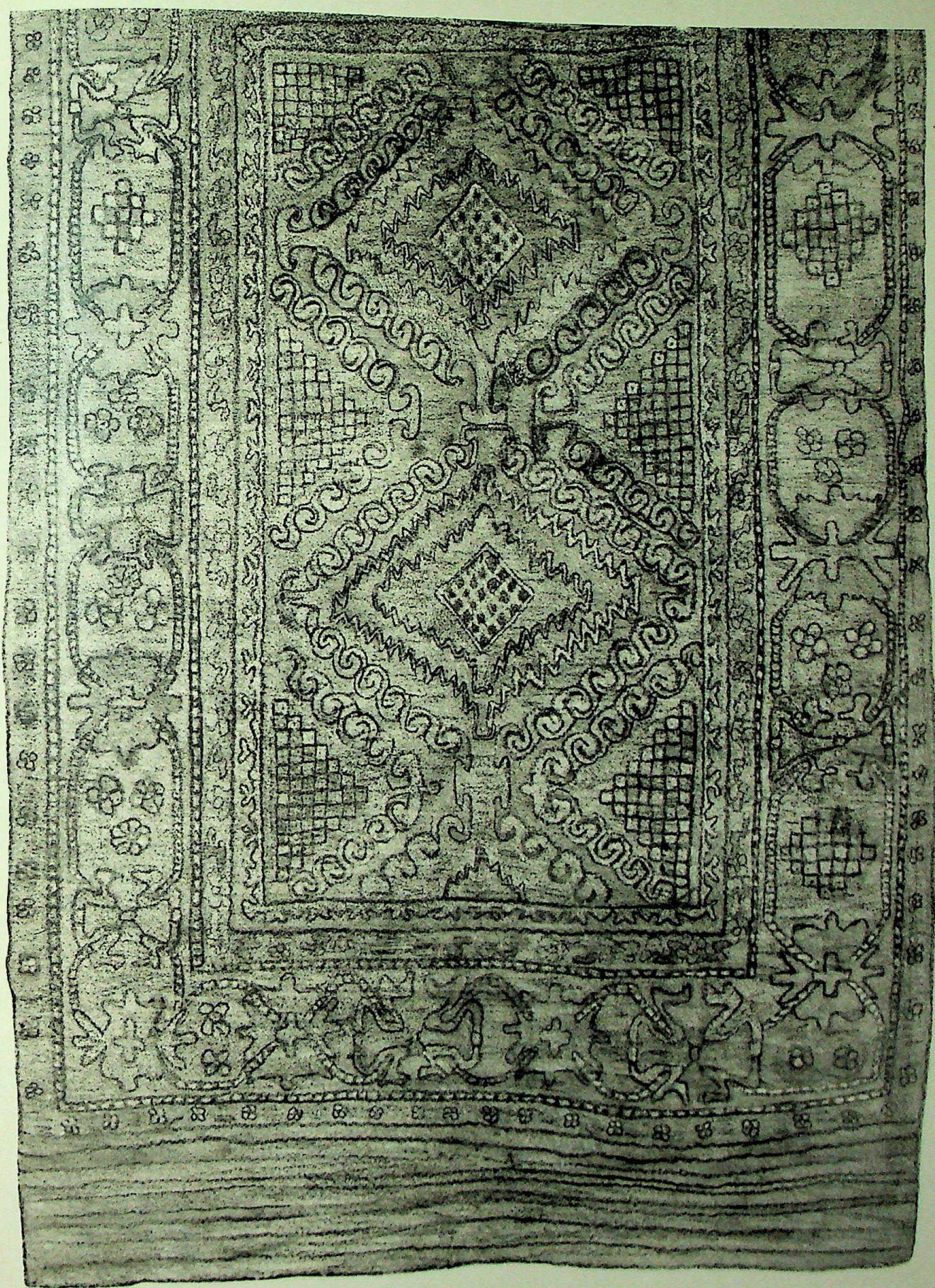
WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Kashmir.



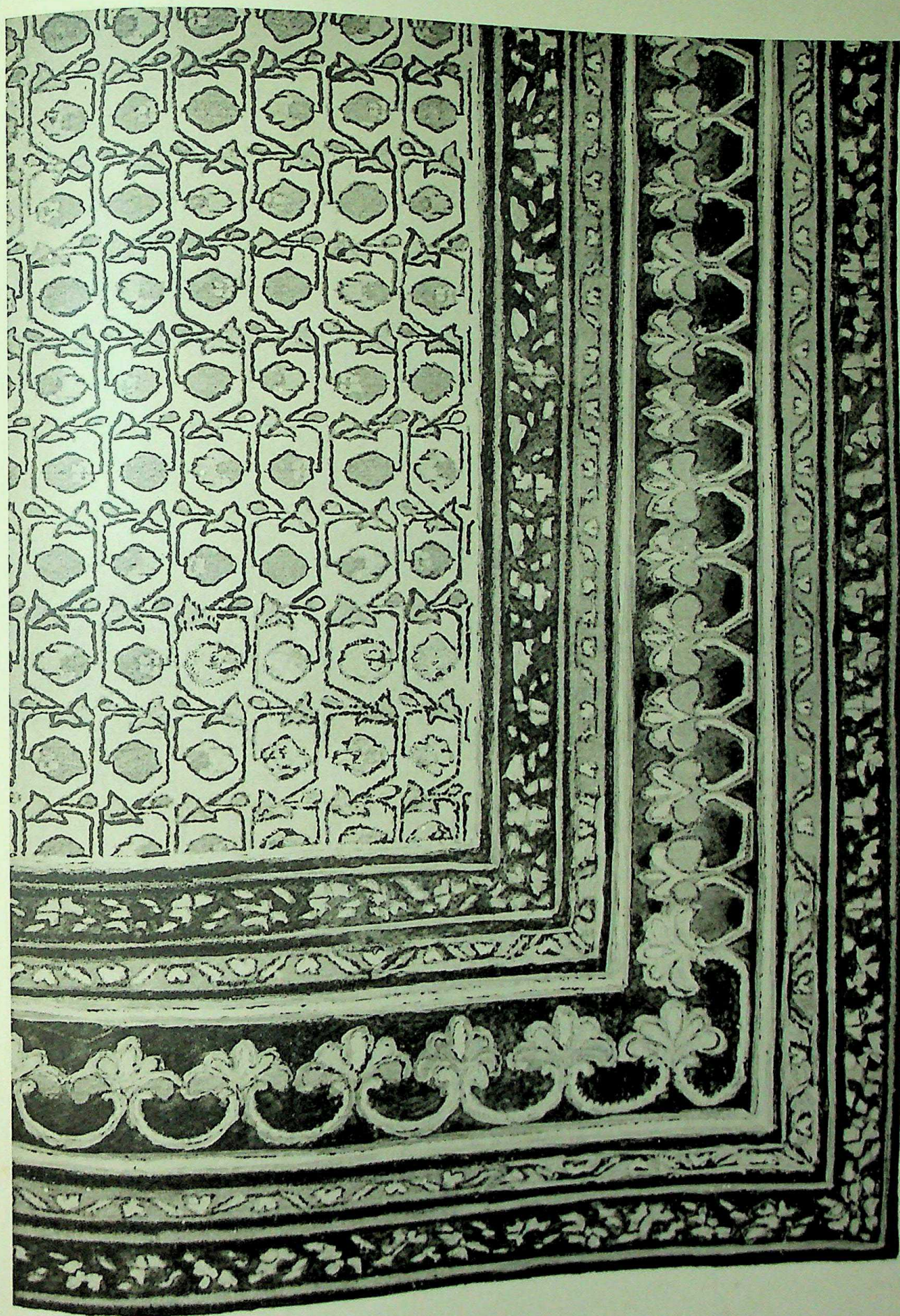
WOOLLEN CARPET. Kashmir.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Kashmir.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



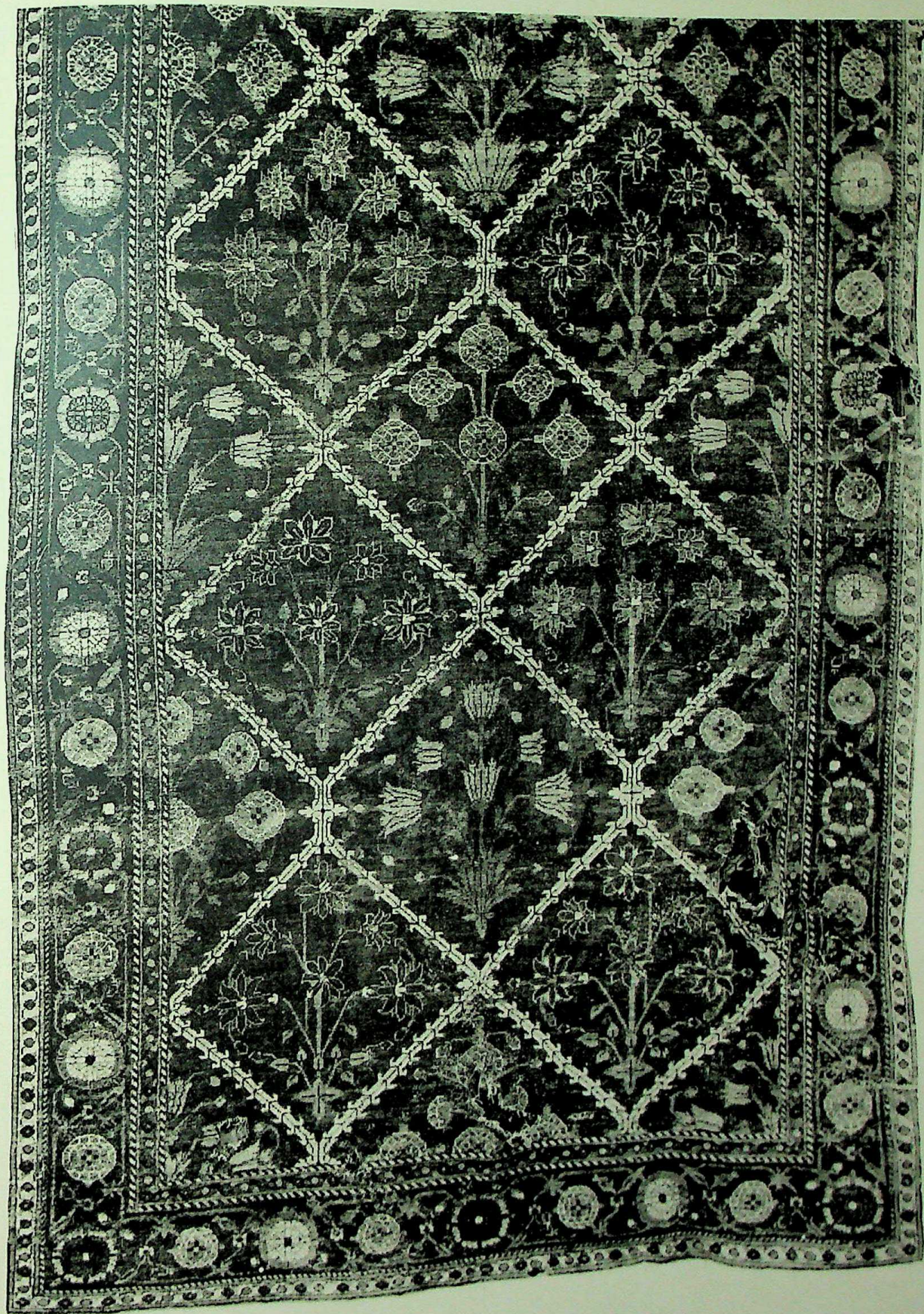
WOOLLEN CARPET. Mirzapur.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



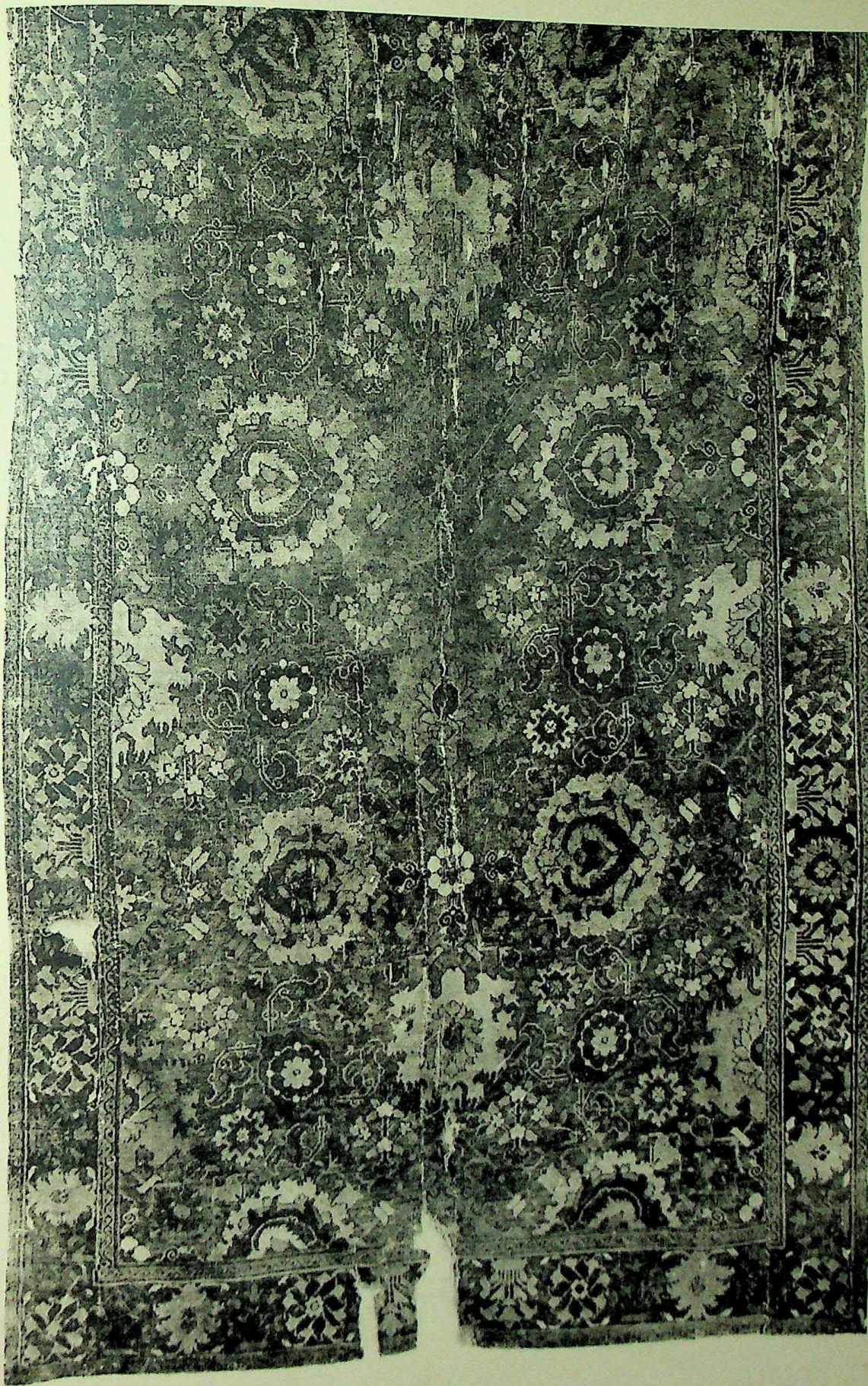
WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



WOOLLEN CARPET. Lahore.



WOOLLEN PILE RUG. Kashmir.



WOOLLEN PILE RUG. Srinagar.



WOOLLEN PILE RUG. Panjab.



WOOLLEN PILE RUG. Hyderabad, Deccan : 19th century.



WOOLLEN PILE RUG. Warangal, Deccan. 19th century.



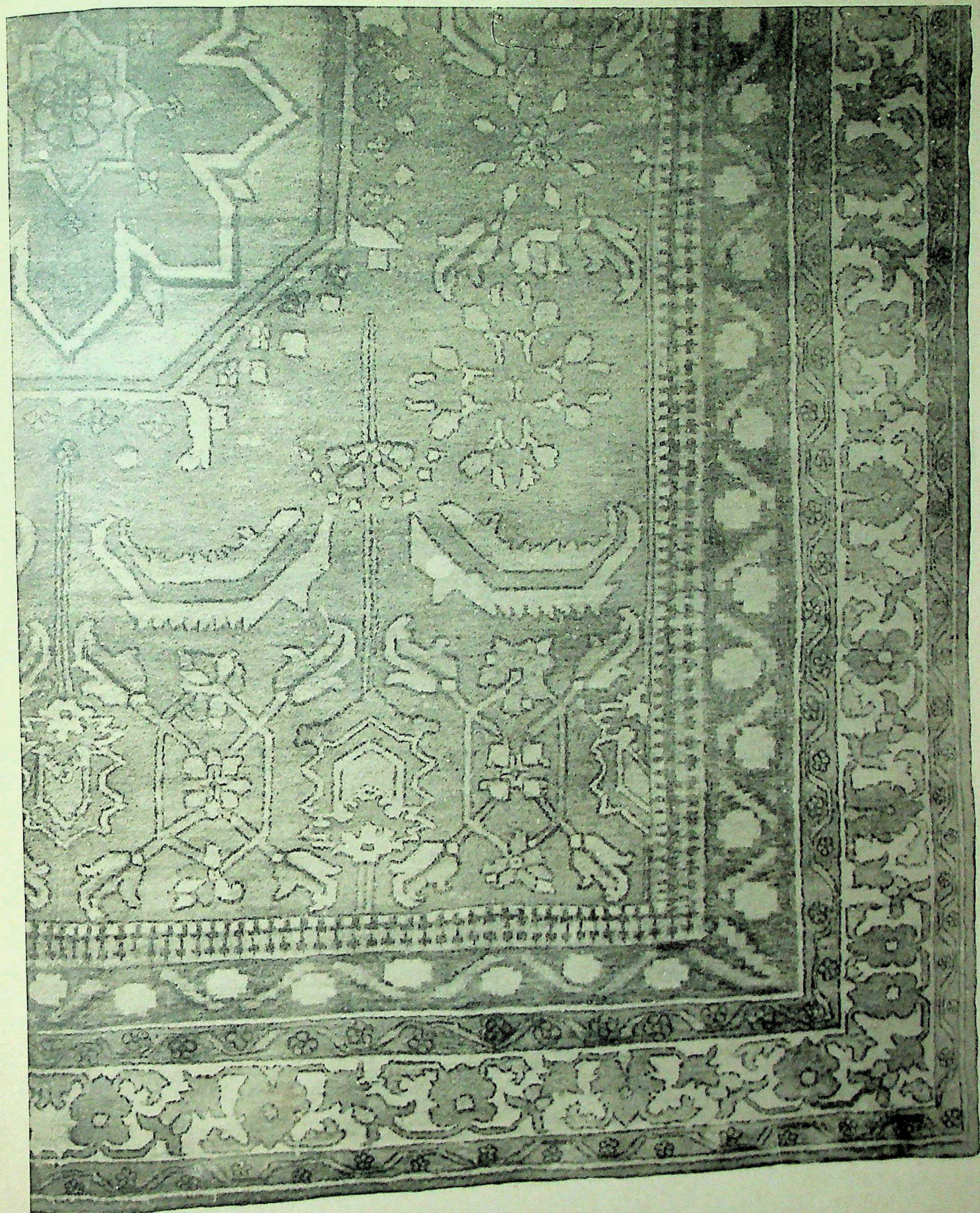
SILK PILE CARPET. Warangal, Deccan.



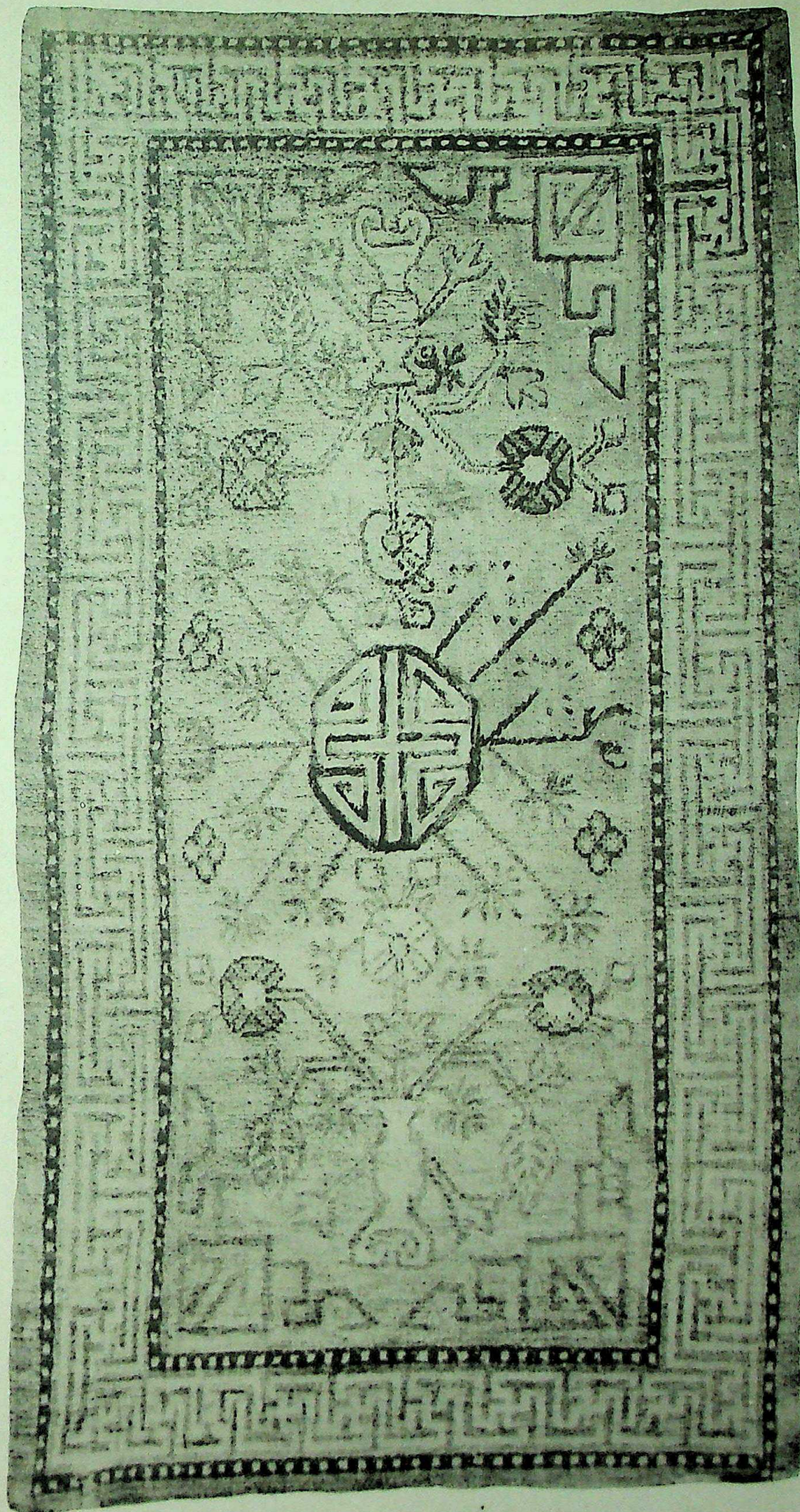
SILK PILE CARPET. Warangal.



SILK PILE CARPET. Warangal, Deccan; 19th century.



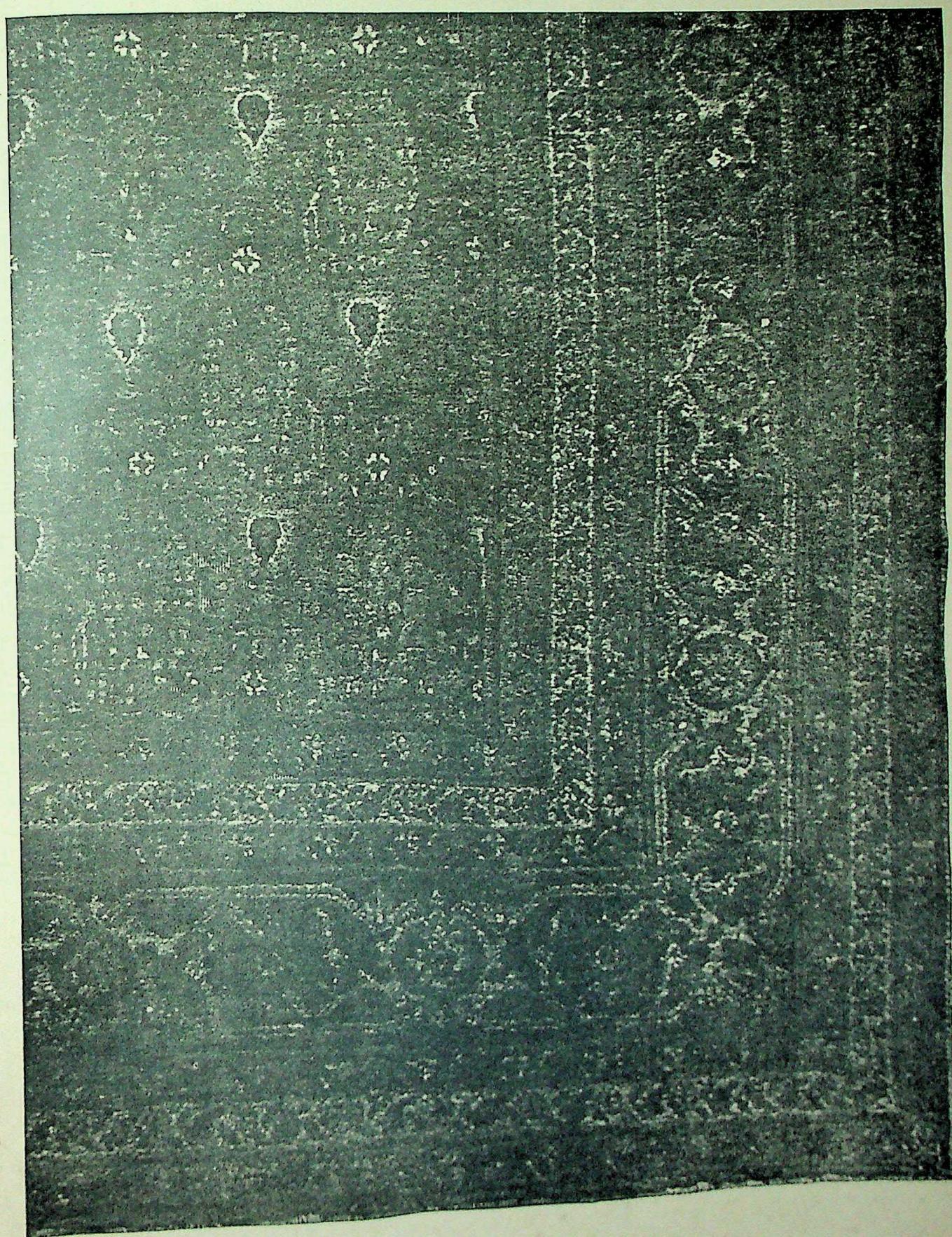
SILK PILE CARPET Madras.



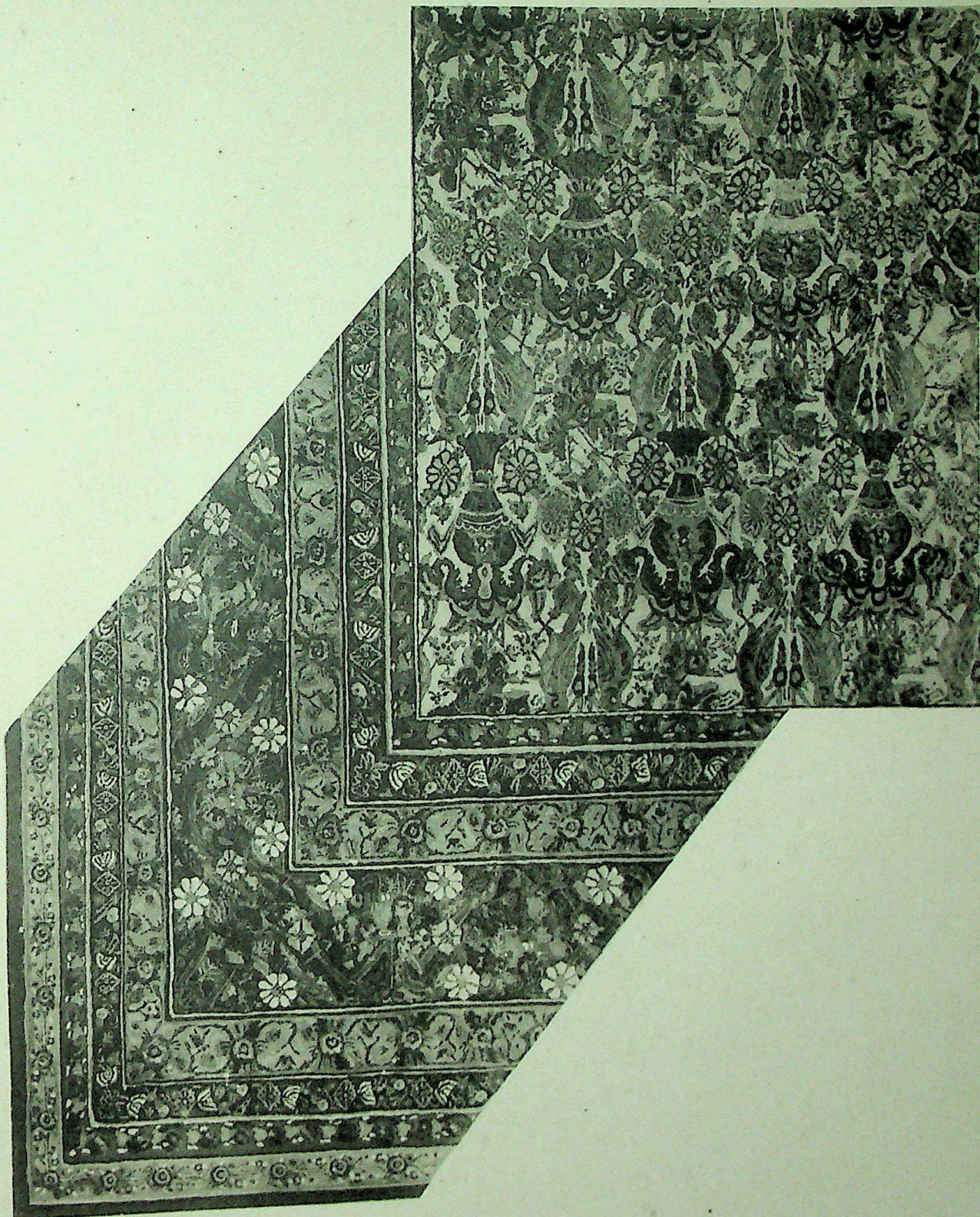
SILK PILE RUG. Yarkand.



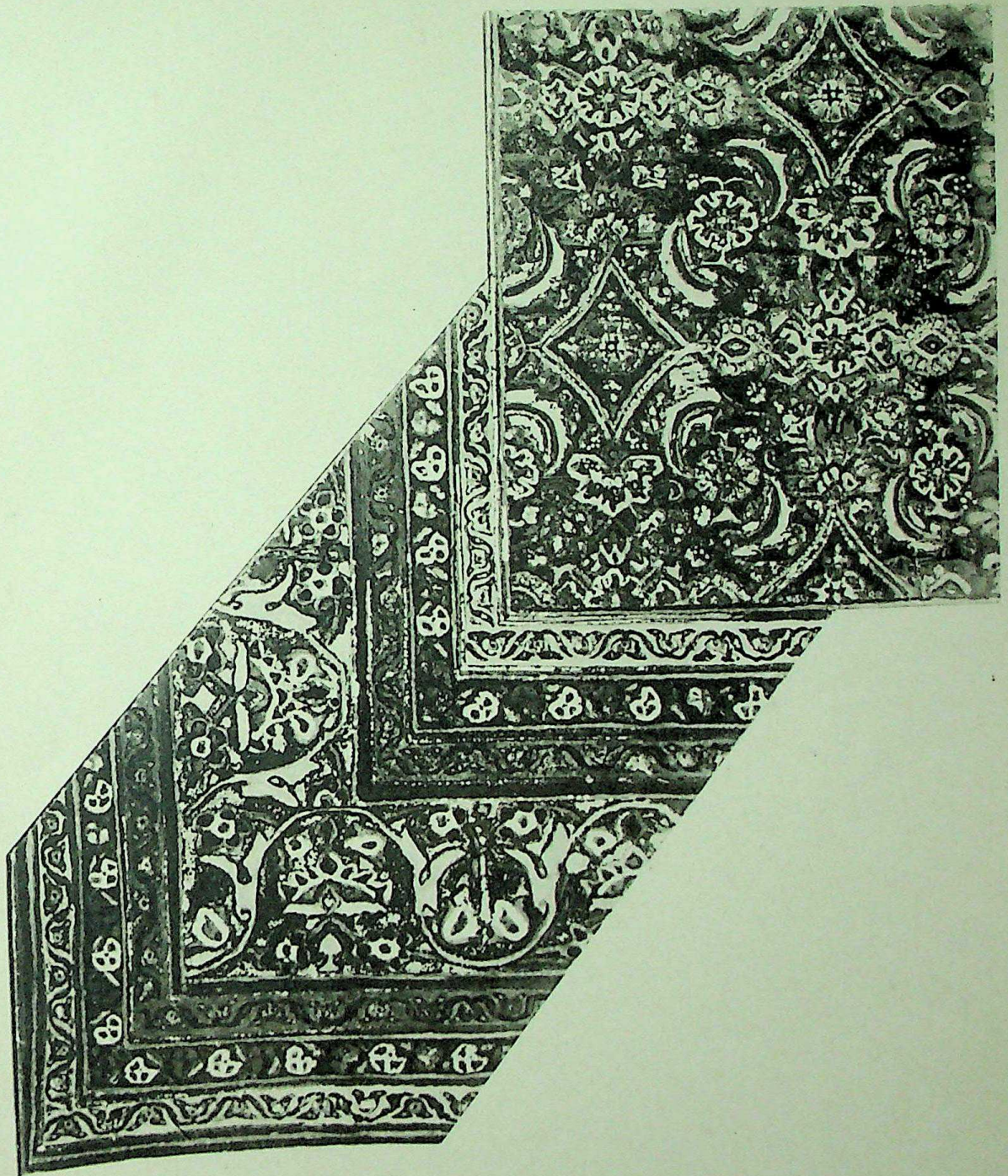
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Mogul; 16th century.



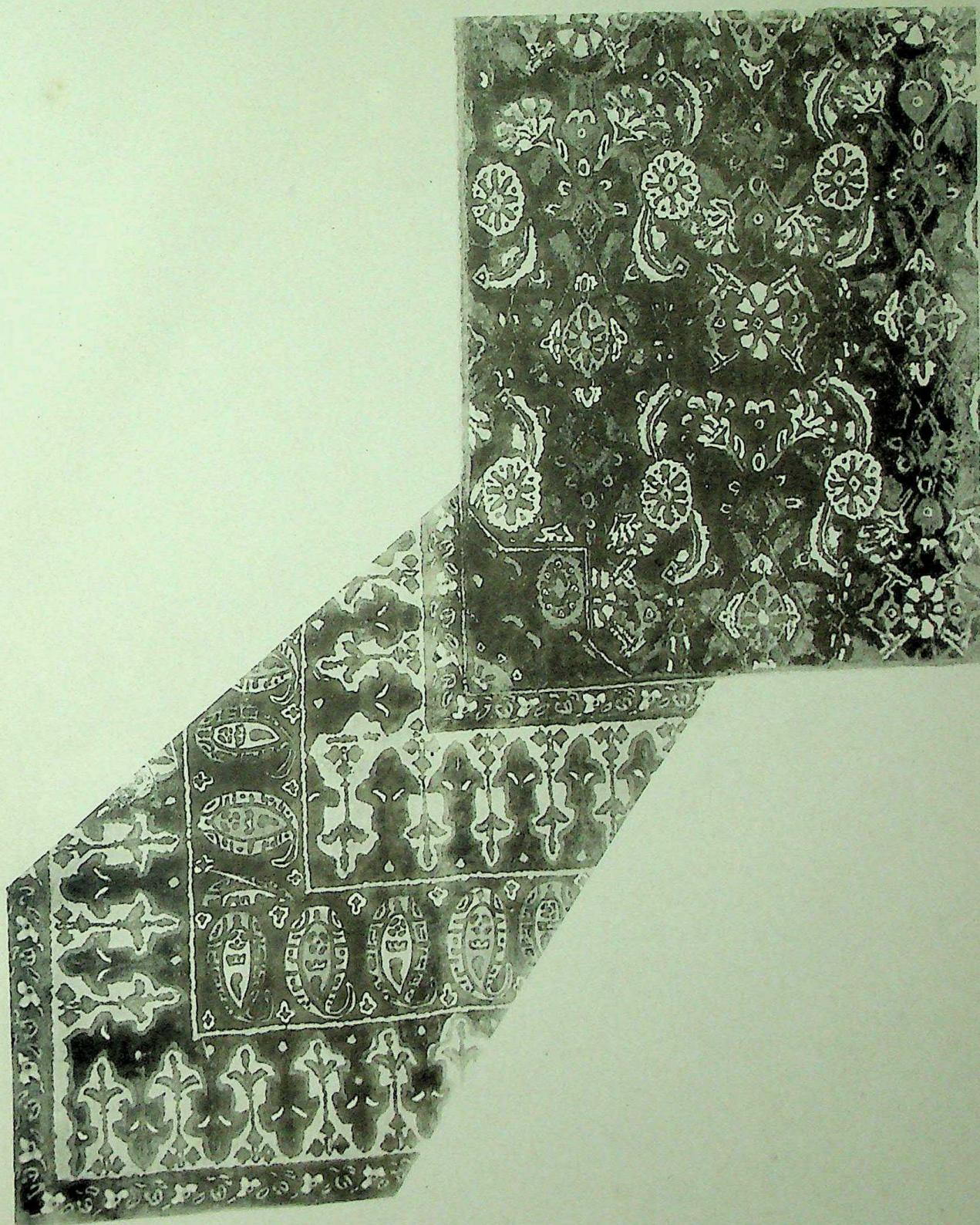
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET.



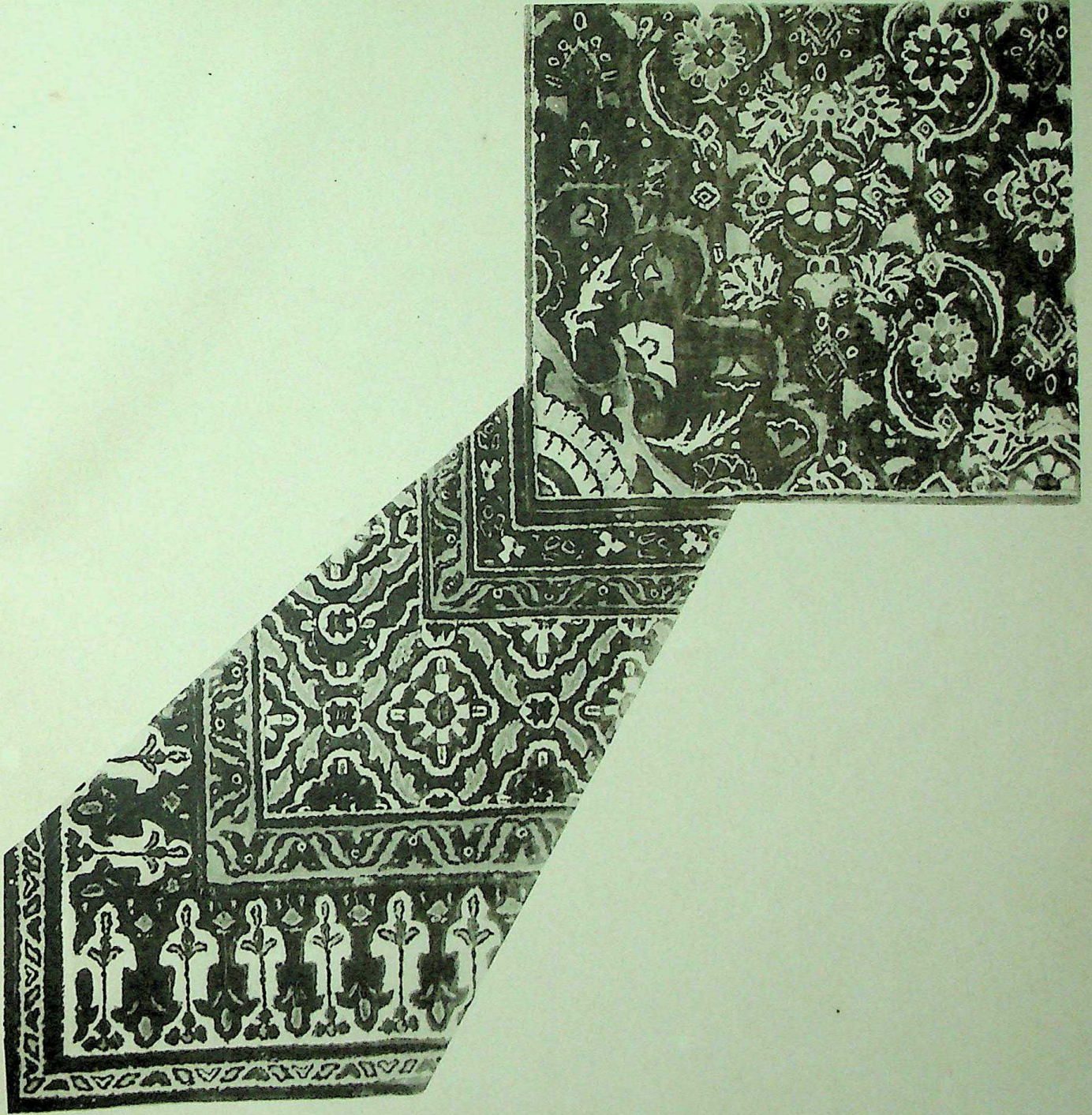
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Mogul; 16th century.



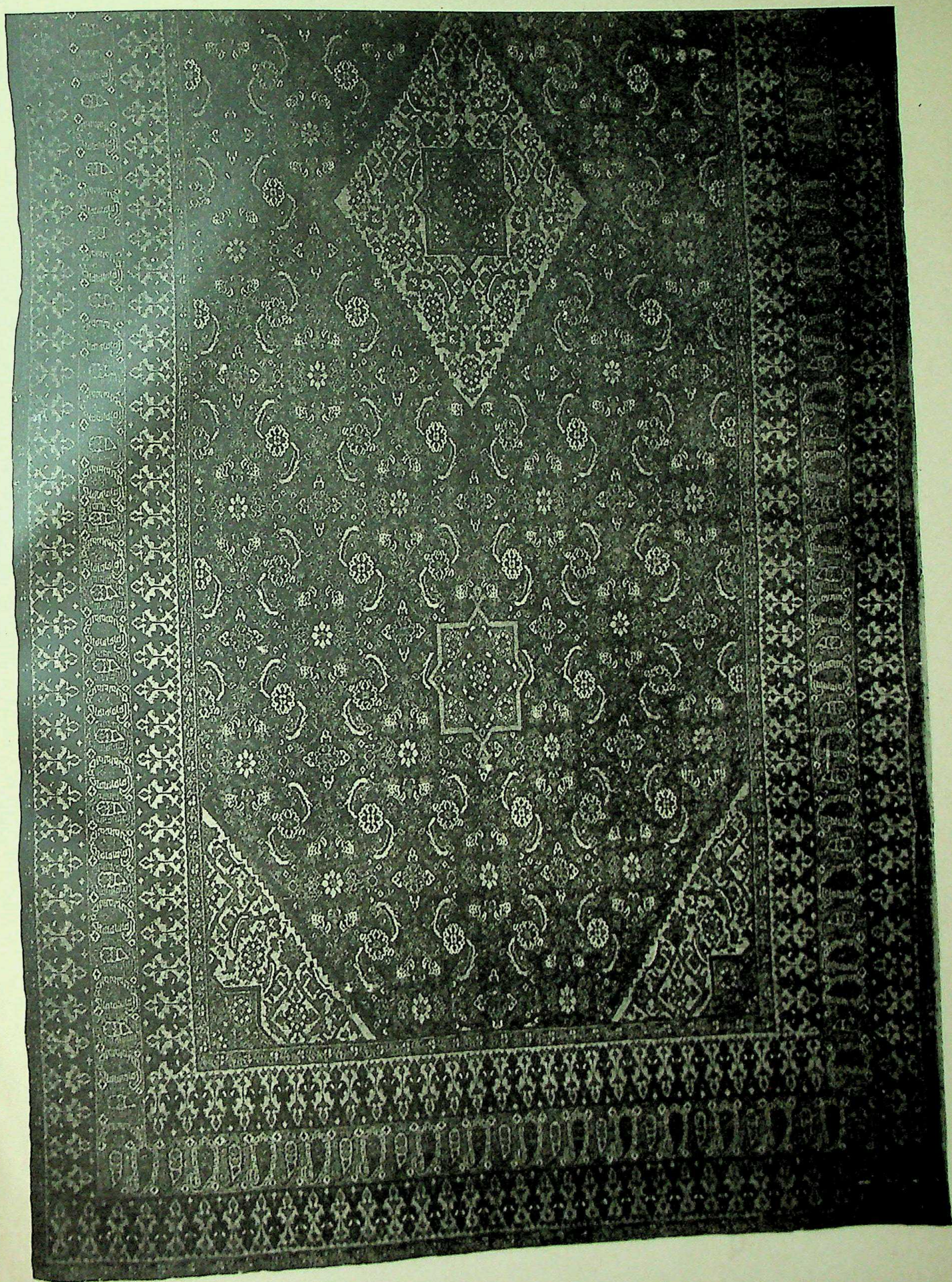
WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Mogul; 16th century.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Mogul; 16th century.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET. Mogul; 16th century.



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET.

